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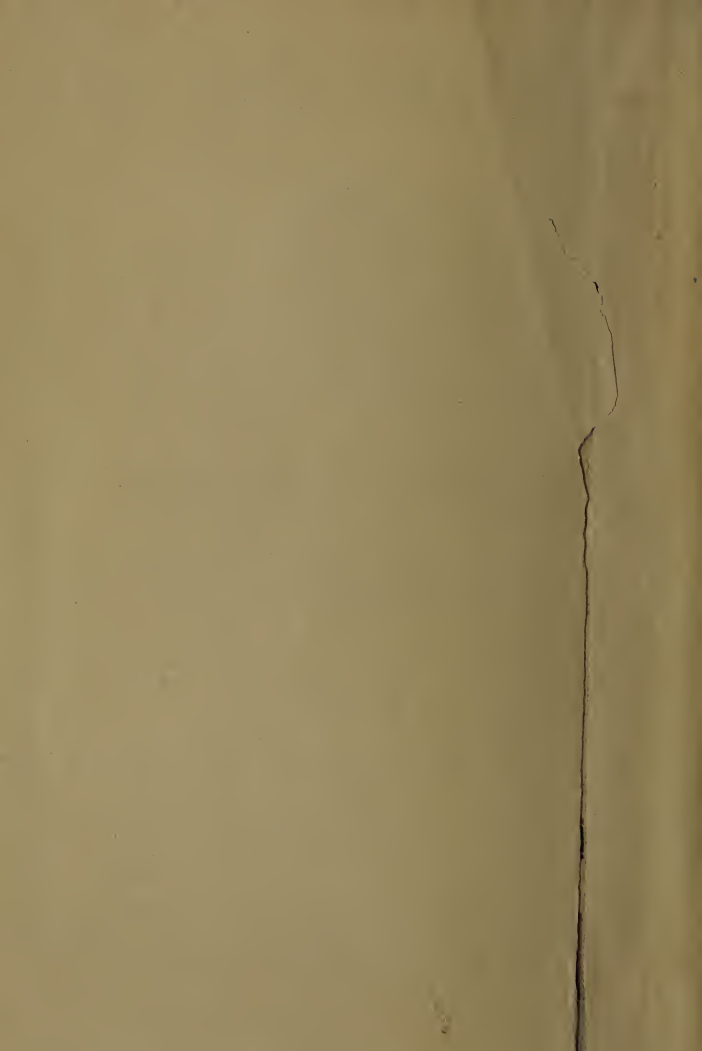
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THE COMMENTARIES

OF

CÆSAR

BY

ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

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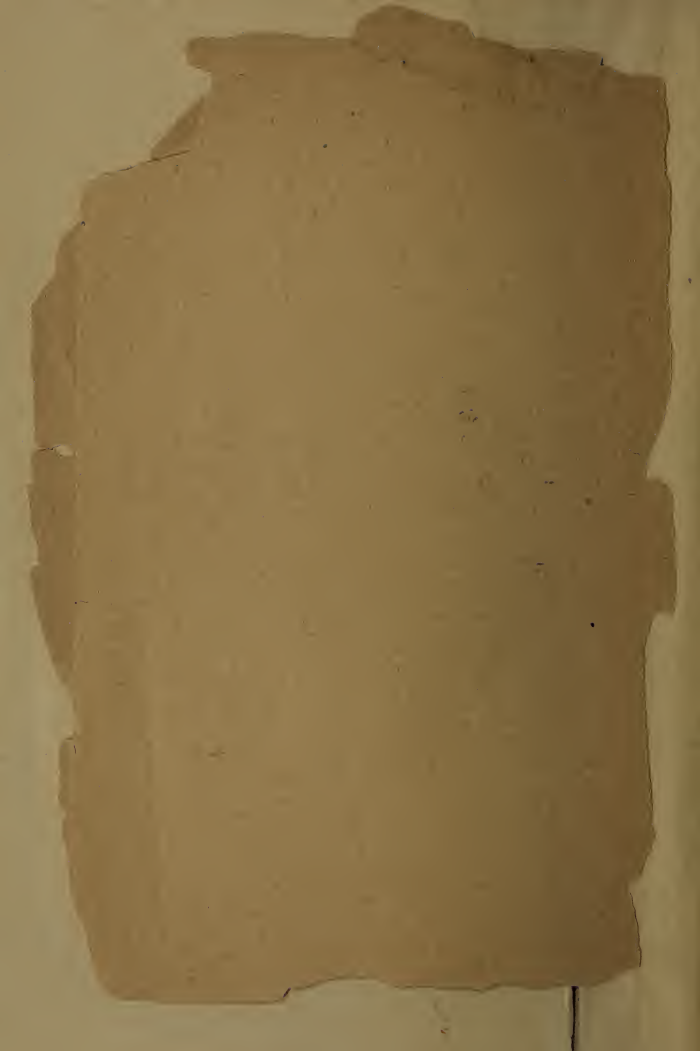
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# CÆSAR.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

It may perhaps be fairly said that the Commentaries of Cæsar are the beginning of modern history. He wrote, indeed, nearly two thousand years ago; but he wrote, not of times then long past, but of things which were done under his own eyes, and of his own deeds. And he wrote of countries with which we are familiar,—of our Britain, for instance, which he twice invaded, of peoples not so far remote but that we can identify them with our neighbors and ourselves; and he so wrote as to make us feel that we are reading actual history, and not romance. The simplicity of the narratives which he has left is their chief characteristic, if not their greatest charm. We feel sure that the circumstances which he tells did occur, and that they occurred very nearly as he tells them. He deals with those great movements in Europe from which have sprung, and to which we can trace, the present political condition of the nations. Interested as the scholar, or the reader of general literature, may be in the great deeds of the heroes of Greece, and in the burning words of Greek orators, it is almost impossible for him to connect by any intimate and thoroughly-trusted link

the fortunes of Athens, or Sparta, or Macedonia, with our own times and our own position. It is almost equally difficult to do so in regard to the events of Rome and the Roman power before the time of Cæsar. We cannot realize and bring home to ourselves the Punic Wars or the Social War, the Scipios and the Gracchi, or even the contest for power between Marius and Sulla, as we do the Gallic Wars and the invasion of Britain, by which the civilization of Rome was first carried westwards, or the great civil wars,—the “*Bellum Civile*,”—by which was commenced a line of emperors continued almost down to our own days, and to which in some degree may be traced the origin and formation of almost every existing European nation. It is no doubt true that if we did but know the facts correctly, we could refer back every political and social condition of the present day to the remotest period of man’s existence; but the interest fails us when the facts become doubtful, and when the mind begins to fear that history is mixed with romance. Herodotus is so mythic that what delight we have in his writings comes in a very slight degree from any desire on our part to form a continuous chain from the days of which he wrote down to our own. Between the marvels of Herodotus and the facts of Cæsar there is a great interval, from which have come down to us the works of various noble historians; but with Cæsar it seems that that certainty commences which we would wish to regard as the distinguishing characteristic of modern history.

It must be remembered from the beginning that Cæsar wrote only of what he did or of what he caused to be done himself. At least he only so wrote in the two works of his which remain to us. We are told that he produced much besides his Commentaries,—



among other works, a poem,—but the two Commentaries are all of his that we have. The former, in seven books, relates the facts of his seven first campaigns in Gaul for seven consecutive years; those campaigns in which he reduced the nations living between the Rhine, the Rhone, the Mediterranean, the Pyrenees, and the sea which we now call the British Channel.\* The latter Commentary relates the circumstances of the civil war in which he contended for power against Pompey, his former colleague, with Crassus, in the first triumvirate, and established that empire to which Augustus succeeded after a second short-lived triumvirate between himself and Lepidus and Antony.

It is the object of this little volume to describe Cæsar's Commentaries for the aid of those who do not read Latin, and not to write Roman history; but it may be well to say something, in a few introductory lines, of the life and character of our author. We are all more or less familiar with the name of Julius Cæsar. In our early days we learned that he was the first of those twelve Roman emperors with whose names it was thought right to burden our young memories; and we were taught to understand that when he began to reign there ceased to exist that form of republican government in which two consuls elected annually did in truth preside over the fortunes of the empire. There had first been seven kings,—whose names have also been made familiar to us,—then the consuls, and after them the twelve Cæsars, of whom the great Julius was the first. So much we all know of him; and we know, too, that he was killed

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\* There is an eighth book, referring to an eighth and ninth campaign, but it is not the work of Cæsar,

in the Capitol by conspirators just as he was going to become emperor, although this latter scrap of knowledge seems to be paradoxically at variance with the former. In addition to this we know that he was a great commander and conqueror and writer, who did things and wrote of them in the "veni, vidi, vici" style—saying of himself, "I came, I saw, I conquered." We know that a great Roman army was intrusted to him, and that he used this army for the purpose of establishing his own power in Rome by taking a portion of it over the Rubicon, which little river separated the province which he had been appointed to govern from the actual Roman territory within which, as a military servant of the magistrates of the republic, he had no business to appear as a general at the head of his army. So much we know; and in the following very short memoir of the great commander and historian, no effort shall be made,—as has been so frequently and so painfully done for us in late years,—to upset the teachings of our youth, and to prove that the old lessons were wrong. They were all fairly accurate, and shall now only be supplemented by a few further circumstances which were doubtless once learned by all school-boys and school-girls, but which some may perhaps have forgotten since those happy days.

Dean Merivale, in one of the early chapters of his admirable history of the Romans under the Empire, declares that Caius Julius Cæsar is the greatest name in history. He makes the claim without reserve, and attaches to it no restriction, or suggestion that such is simply his own opinion. Claims of this nature, made by writers on behalf of their pet-heroes, we are, all of us, generally inclined to dispute, but this claim, great

for that second Cæsar, his uncle. And the perfection which he claims is not that of which Mommsen speaks. The German intends to convey to us his conviction that Cæsar was perfect in human capacity and intelligence. Napoleon claims for him moral perfection. "We may be convinced," says the Emperor, "by the above facts, that during his first consulate, one only motive animated Cæsar,—namely, the public interest." We cannot, however, quite take the facts as the Emperor of the French gives them to us, nor can we share his conviction; but the common consent of reading men will probably acknowledge that there is in history no name so great as that of Julius Cæsar,—of whose written works some account is intended to be given in the following chapters.

He was born just one hundred years before Christ, and came of an old noble Roman family, of which Julius and not Cæsar was the distinctive name. Whence came the name of Cæsar has been a matter of doubt and of legend. Some say that it arose from the thick hair of one of the Julian tribe; others that a certain scion of the family, like Macduff, "was from his mother's womb untimely ripped," for which derivations Latin words are found to be opportune. Again we are told that one of the family once kept an elephant,—and we are referred to some eastern language in which the word for elephant has a sound like Cæsar. Another legend also rose from Cæsar's name, which, in the Gallic language of those days,—very luckily for Cæsar,—sounded as though one should say, "Send him back." Cæsar's horse once ran away with him, and carried him over to the enemy. An insolent Gaul, who knew him, called out, "Cæsar, Cæsar!" and so the other Gauls, obeying the order supposed to be given, allowed the

illustrious one to escape. It must be acknowledged, however, that the learned German who tells us this story expresses a contemptuous conviction that it cannot be true. Whatever may have produced the word, its significance, derived from the doings and writings of Caius Julius, has been very great. It has come to mean in various languages the holder of despotic power; and though it is said that, as a fact, the Russian title Czar has no connection with the Roman word, so great is the prestige of the name, that in the minds of men the popular appellation of the Russian Emperor will always be connected with that of the line of the Roman Emperor.

Cæsar was the nephew by marriage of that Marius who, with alternations of bloody successes and seemingly irreparable ruin, had carried on a contest with Sulla for supreme power in the republic. Sulla in these struggles had represented the aristocrats and patricians,—what we perhaps may call the Conservative interest; while Marius, whose origin was low, who had been a common soldier, and, rising from the ranks, had become the darling of the army and of the people, may perhaps be regarded as one who would have called himself a Liberal, had any such term been known in those days. His liberality,—as has been the case with other political leaders since his time,—led him to personal power. He was seven times Consul, having secured his seventh election by atrocious barbarities and butcherings of his enemies in the city; and during this last consulship he died. The young Cæsar, though a patrician by birth, succeeded his uncle in the popular party, and seems from a very early age,—from his very boyhood,—to have looked forward to the power which he might win by playing his cards with discretion.

And very discreet he was,—self-confident to a wonderful degree, and patient also. It is to be presumed that most of our readers know how the Roman Republic fell, and the Roman Empire became established as the result of the civil wars which began with Marius and ended with that “young Octavius” whom we better recognize as Augustus Cæsar. Julius Cæsar was the nephew by marriage of Marius, and Augustus was the great-nephew and heir of Julius. By means of conscriptions and murders, worse in their nature, though less probably in number, than those which disgraced the French Revolution, the power which Marius achieved almost without foresight, for which the great Cæsar strove from his youth upwards with constant foresight, was confirmed in the hands of Augustus, and bequeathed by him to the emperors. In looking back at the annals of the world, we shall generally find that despotic power has first grown out of popular movement against authority. It was so with our own Cromwell, has twice been so in the history of modern France, and certainly was so in the formation of the Roman Empire. In the great work of establishing that empire, it was the mind and hand and courage of Cæsar that brought about the result, whether it was for good or evil. And in looking at the lives of the three men—Marius, Cæsar, and Augustus, who followed each other, and all worked to the same end, the destruction of that oligarchy which was called a Republic in Rome—we find that the one was a man, while the others were beasts of prey. The cruelties of Marius as an old man, and of Augustus as a young one, were so astounding, as, even at this distance, to horrify the reader, though he remembers that Christianity had not yet softened men’s hearts. Marius, the old man, almost swam in the

blood of his enemies, as also did his rival Sulla; but the young Octavius, he whom the gods favored so long as the almost divine\* Augustus, cemented his throne with the blood of his friends. To complete the satisfaction of Lepidus and Antony, his comrades in the second triumvirate, he did not scruple to add to the list of those who were to die, the names of the nearest and dearest to him. Between these monsters of cruelty—between Marius and Sulla, who went before him, and Octavius and Antony who followed him—Cæsar has become famous for clemency. And yet the hair of the reader almost stands on end with horror as Cæsar recounts in page after page the stories of cities burned to the ground, and whole communities slaughtered in cold blood. Of the destruction of the women and children of an entire tribe, Cæsar will leave the unimpassioned record in one line. But this at least may be said of Cæsar, that he took no delight in slaughter. When it became in his sight expedient that a people should suffer, so that others might learn to yield and to obey, he could give the order apparently without an effort. And we hear of no regrets, or of any remorse which followed the execution of it. But bloodshed in itself was not sweet to him. He was a discreet, far-seeing man, and could do without a scruple what discretion and caution demanded of him.

And it may be said of Cæsar that he was in some sort guided in his life by sense of duty and love of country; as it may also be said of his great contemporaries, Pompey and Cicero. With those who went

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\* Cœlo tonantem credidimus Jovem  
Regnare; præsens Divus habebitur  
Augustus,



before him, Marius and Sulla, as also with those who followed him, Antony and Augustus, it does not seem that any such motives actuated them. Love of power and greed, hatred of their enemies and personal ambition, a feeling that they were urged on by their fates to seek for high place, and a resolve that it was better to kill than be killed, impelled them to their courses. These feelings were strong, too, with Cæsar, as they are strong to this day with statesmen and with generals; but mingled with them in Cæsar's breast there was a noble idea, that he would be true to the greatness of Rome, and that he would grasp at power in order that the Roman Empire might be well governed. Augustus, doubtless, ruled well; and to Julius Cæsar very little scope for ruling was allowed after his battling was done; but to Augustus no higher praise can be assigned than that he had the intelligence to see that the temporary wellbeing of the citizens of Rome was the best guarantee for his own security.

Early in life Cæsar lifted himself to high position, though he did so in the midst of dangers. It was the wonder of those around him that Sulla did not murder him when he was young,—crush him while he was yet, as it were, in his shell; but Sulla spared him, and he rose apace. We are told that he became priest of Jupiter at seventeen, and he was then already a married man. He early trained himself as a public orator, and amidst every danger espoused the popular cause in Rome. He served his country in the East,—in Bithynia, probably,—escaping, by doing so, the perils of a residence in the city. He became Quæstor and then Ædile, assisted by all the Marian party, as that party would assist the rising man whom they regarded as their future leader. He attacked and was attacked,

and was "indefatigable in harassing the aristocracy,"\* who strove, but strove in vain, to crush him. Though young, and addicted to all the pleasures of youth,—a trifler, as Sulla once called him,—he omitted to learn nothing that was necessary for him to know as a chief of a great party and a leader of great armies. When he was thirty-seven he was made Pontifex Maximus, the official chief of the priesthood of Rome, the office greatest in honor of any in the city, although opposed by the whole weight of the aristocracy, and although Catulus was a candidate, who, of all that party, was the highest not only in renown but in virtue. He became Prætor the next year, though again he was opposed by all the influence of those who feared him. And, after his twelve months of office, he assumed the government of Spain,—the province allotted to him as Proprætor, in accordance with the usage of the Republic,—in the teeth of a decree of the Senate ordering him to remain in Rome. Here he gained his first great military success, first made himself known to his soldiery, and came back to Rome entitled to the honor of a triumph.

But there was still another step on the ladder of the State before he could assume the position which no doubt he already saw before him. He must be Consul before he could be master of many legions, and in order that he might sue in proper form for the consulship, it was necessary that he should abandon his Triumph. He could only triumph as holding the office of General of the Republic's forces, and as General or Imperator he could not enter the city. He abandoned

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\* The words are taken from Dean Merivale's history.



the Triumph, sued for his office in the common fashion, and enabled the citizens to say that he preferred their service to his personal honors. At the age of forty-one he became Consul. It was during the struggle for the consulship that the triumvirate was formed, of which subsequent ages have heard so much, and of which Romans at the time heard probably so little. Pompey, who had been the political child of Sulla, and had been the hope of the patricians to whom he belonged, had returned to Rome after various victories which he had achieved as Proconsul in the East, had triumphed,—and had ventured to recline on his honors, disbanding his army and taking to himself the credit of subsiding into privacy. The times were too rough for such honest duty, and Pompey found himself for a while slighted by his party. Though he had thought himself able to abandon power, he could not bear the loss of it. It may be that he had conceived himself able to rule the city by his influence without the aid of his legions. Cæsar tempted him, and they two with Crassus, who was wanted for his wealth, formed the first triumvirate. By such pact among themselves they were to rule all Rome and all Rome's provinces; but doubtless, by resolves within himself of which no one knew, Cæsar intended even then to grasp the dominion of the whole in his own hands. During the years that followed,—the years in which Cæsar was engaged in his Gallic wars,—Pompey remained at Rome, not indeed as Cæsar's friend—for that hollow friendship was brought to an end by the death of Julia, Cæsar's daughter, whom Pompey, though five years Cæsar's elder, had married—but in undecided rivalry to the active man who in foreign wars was preparing legions by which to win the Empire. Afterwards,

when Cæsar, as we shall hear, had crossed the Rubicon, their enmity was declared. It was natural that they should be enemies. In middle life, Pompey, as we have seen, had married Cæsar's daughter, and Cæsar's second wife had been a Pompeia.\* But when they were young, and each was anxious to attach himself to the politics of his own party, Pompey had married the daughter-in-law of Sulla, and Cæsar had married the daughter of Cinna, who had almost been joined with Marius in leading the popular party. Such having been the connection they had made in their early lives, it was natural that Pompey and Cæsar should be enemies, and that the union of those two with any other third in a triumvirate should be but a hollow compromise, planned and carried out only that time might be gained.

Cæsar was now Consul, and from his consular chair laughed to scorn the Senate and the aristocratic colleague with whom he was joined,—Bibulus, of whom we shall again hear in the Commentary on the civil

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\* She was that wife who was false with Clodius, and whom Cæsar divorced, declaring that Cæsar's wife must not even be suspected. He would not keep the false wife; neither would he at that moment take part in the accusation against Clodius, who was of his party, and against whom such accusation backed by Cæsar would have been fatal. The intrusion of the demagogue into Cæsar's house in the pursuit of Cæsar's wife during the mysteries of the Bona Dea became the subject of a trial in Rome. The offence was terrible and was notorious. Clodius, who was hated and feared by the patricians, was a favorite with the popular party. The offender was at last brought to trial, and was acquitted by venal judges. A word spoken by the injured husband would have insured his condemnation, but that word Cæsar would not speak. His wife he could divorce, but he would not jeopardize his power with his own party by demanding the punishment of him who had debauched her.

war. During his year of office he seems to have ruled almost supreme and almost alone. The Senate was forced to do his bidding, and Pompey, at any rate for this year, was his ally. We already know that to prætors and to consuls, after their year of office in the city, were confided the government of the great provinces of the Republic, and that these officers while so governing were called *proprætors* and *proconsuls*. After his prætorship Cæsar had gone for a year to southern Spain, the province which had been assigned to him, whence he came back triumphant,—but not to enjoy his Triumph. At the expiration of his consulship the joint provinces of Cisalpine Gaul and Illyricum were assigned to him, not for one year, but for five years; and to these was added Transalpine Gaul, by which grant dominion was given to him over all that country which we now know as Northern Italy, over Illyria to the east, and to the west across the Alps, over the Roman province already established in the south of France. This province, bounded on the north by Lake Lemman and the Swiss mountains, ran south to the Mediterranean, and to the west half across the great neck of land which joins Spain to the continent of Europe. This province of Transalpine Gaul was already Roman, and to Cæsar was intrusted the task of defending this, and of defending Rome itself, from the terrible valor of the Gauls. That he might do this it was necessary that he should collect his legions in that other Gaul which we now know as the north of Italy.

It does not seem that there was any preconceived idea that Cæsar should reduce all Gallia beneath the Roman yoke. Hitherto Rome had feared the Gauls, and had been subject to their inroads. The Gauls in

former years had even made their way as invaders into the very city, and had been bought out with a ransom. They had spread themselves over Northern Italy, and hence, when Northern Italy was conquered by Roman arms, it became a province under the name of Cisalpine Gaul. Then, during the hundred years which preceded Cæsar's wars, a province was gradually founded and extended in the south of France, of which Marseilles was the kernel. Massilia had been a colony of Greek merchants, and was supported by the alliance of Rome. Whither such alliance leads is known to all readers of history. The Greek colony became a Roman town, and the Roman province stretched itself around the town. It was Cæsar's duty, as governor of Transalpine Gaul, to see that the poor province was not hurt by those ravaging Gauls. How he performed that duty he tells us in his first Commentary.

During the fourth year of his office, while Pompey and Crassus, his colleagues in the then existing triumvirate, were consuls, his term of dominion over the three provinces was prolonged by the addition of five other years. But he did not see the end of the ten years in that scene of action. Julia, his daughter, had died, and his great rival was estranged from him. The Senate had clamored for his recall, and Pompey, with doubtful words, had assented. A portion of his army was demanded from him, was sent by him into Italy in obedience to the Senate, and shortly afterwards was placed under the command of Pompey. Then Cæsar found that the Italian side of the Alps was the more convenient for his purposes, that the Hither or Cisalpine Gaul demanded his services, and that it would be well for him to be near the Rubicon. The second Commentary, in three books, '*De Bello Civili*,' giving

us his record of the civil war, tells us of his deeds and fortunes for the next two years,—the years B. C. 49 and 48. The continuation of his career as a general is related in three other Commentaries, not by his own hand, to which, as being beyond the scope of this volume, only short allusion will be made. Then came one year of power, full of glory, and, upon the whole, well used; and after that there came the end, of which the tale has been so often told, when he fell, stabbed by friend and foe, at the foot of Pompey's pillar in the Capitol.

It is only further necessary that a few words should be added as to the character of Cæsar's writings,—for it is of his writings rather than of his career that it is intended here to give some idea to those who have not an opportunity of reading them. Cæsar's story can hardly be told in this little volume, for it is the history of the world as the world then was. The word which our author has chosen as a name for his work,—and which now has become so well known as connected with Cæsar, that he who uses it seems to speak of Cæsar,—means, in Cæsar's sense, a Memoir. Were it not for Cæsar, a "Commentary" would be taken to signify that which the critic had added, rather than the work which the author had first produced. Cæsar's "Commentaries" are memoirs written by himself, descriptive of his different campaigns, in which he treats of himself in the third person, and tells his story as it might have been told by some accompanying scribe or secretary. This being so, we are of course driven to inquire whether some accompanying scribe or secretary may not in truth have done the work. And there is doubtless one great argument which must be powerful with us all towards the adoption of such a surmise. The amount of work which

Cæsar had on hand, not only in regard to his campaigns, but in the conduct of his political career, was so great as to have overtaken any brain without the addition of literary labor. Surely no man was ever so worked; for the doctrine of the division of labor did not prevail then in great affairs as it does now. Cæsar was not only a general; he was also an engineer, an astronomer, an orator, a poet, a high priest—to whom, as such, though himself, as we are told, a disbeliever in the gods of Olympus, the intricate and complicated system of Roman worship was a necessary knowledge. And he was a politician, of whom it may be said that, though he was intimately acquainted with the ferocity of opposition, he knew nothing of its comparative leisure. We have had busy statesmen writing books, two prime ministers translating Homer, another writing novels, a fourth known as a historian, a dramatist, and a biographer. But they did not lead armies as well as the Houses of Parliament, and they were occasionally blessed by the opportunities of comparative political retirement which opposition affords. From the beginning of the Gallic war, Cæsar was fighting in person every year but one till he died. It was only by personal fighting that he could obtain success. The reader of the following pages will find that, with the solitary exception of the siege of Marseilles, nothing great was done for him in his absence. And he had to make his army as well as to lead it. Legion by legion, he had to collect it as he needed it, and to collect it by the force of his own character and of his own name. The abnormal plunder with which it was necessary that his soldiers should be allured to abnormal valor and toil had to be given as though from his own hand. For every detail of the soldiers' work he was responsible; and at the same time



it was incumbent on him so to manipulate his Roman enemies at Rome,—and harder still than that, his Roman friends,—that confusion and destruction should not fall upon him as a politician. Thus weighted, could he write his own Commentaries? There is reason to believe that there was collected by him, no doubt with the aid of his secretaries, a large body of notes which were known as the *Ephemerides* of Cæsar,—jottings down, as we may say, taken from day to day. Were not the Commentaries which bear Cæsar's name composed from these notes by some learned and cunning secretary?

These notes have been the cause of much scholastic wrath to some of the editors and critics. One learned German, hotly arguing that Cæsar wrote no *Ephemerides*, does allow that somebody must have written down the measurements of the journeys, of the mountains, and of the rivers, the number also of the captives and of the slaves.\* “Not even I,” says he,—“not even do I believe that Cæsar was able to keep all these things simply in his memory.” Then he goes on to assert that to the keeping of such notes any scribe was equal; and that it was improbable that Cæsar could have found time for the keeping of notes when absolutely in his tent. The indignation and enthusiasm are comic, but the reasoning seems to be good. The notes were probably collected under Cæsar's immediate eyes by his secretaries; but there is ample evidence that the Commentaries themselves are Cæsar's own work. They seem to have become known at once to the learned Romans of the day; and Cicero, who was probably the most learned, and cer-

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\* Nipperdeius.

tainly the best critic of the time, speaks of them without any doubt as to their authorship. It was at once known that the first seven books of the Gallic War were written by Cæsar, and that the eighth was not. This seems to be conclusive. But in addition to this, there is internal evidence. Cæsar writes in the third person, and is very careful to maintain that mode of expression. But he is not so careful but that on three or four occasions he forgets himself, and speaks in the first person. No other writer, writing for Cæsar, would have done so. And there are certain trifles in the mode of telling the story, which must have been personal to the man. He writes of "young" Crassus, and "young" Brutus, as no scribe would have written; and he shows, first his own pride in obtaining a legion from Pompey's friendship, and then his unmeasured disgust when the Senate demand and obtain from him that legion and another one, and when Pompey uses them against himself, in a fashion which would go far to prove the authenticity of each Commentary, were any proof needed. But the assent of Cæsar's contemporaries suffices for this without other evidence.

And it seems that they were written as the wars were carried on, and that each was published at once. Had it not been so, we could not understand that Cæsar should have begun the second Commentary before he had finished the first. It seems that he was hindered by the urgency of the Civil War from writing what with him would have been the two last books of the Gallic War, and therefore put the completion of that work into the hands of his friend Hirtius, who wrote the memoir of the two years in one book. And Cæsar's mode of speaking of men who were at one time his friends and then his enemies,



shows that his first Commentary was completed and out of hand before the other was written. Labienus, who in the Gallic War was Cæsar's most trusted lieutenant, went over to the other side and served under Pompey in the Civil War. He could not have failed to allude in some way to the desertion of Labienus, in the first Commentary, had Labienus left him and joined Pompey while the first Commentary was still in his hands.

His style was at once recognized by the great literary critic of the day as being excellent for its intended purpose. Cæsar is manifestly not ambitious of literary distinction, but is very anxious to convey to his readers a narrative of his own doings, which shall be graphic, succinct, intelligible, and sufficiently well expressed to insure the attention of readers. Cicero, the great critic, thus speaks of the Commentaries: "*Valde quidam, inquam, probandos; nudi enim sunt, recti, et venusti, omni ornatu orationis, tanquam, veste, detracto.*" The passage is easily understood, but not perhaps very easily translated into English. "I pronounce them, indeed, to be very commendable, for they are simple, straightforward, agreeable, with all rhetorical ornament stripped from them, as a garment is stripped." This was written by Cicero while Cæsar was yet living, as the context shows. And Cicero does not mean to imply that Cæsar's writings are bald or uncouth: the word "*venusti*" is evidence of this. And again, speaking of Cæsar's language, Cicero says that Cæsar spoke with more finished choice of words than almost any other orator of the day. And if he so spoke, he certainly so wrote, for the great speeches of the Romans were all written compositions. Montaigne says of Cæsar: "I read this

author with somewhat more reverence and respect than is usually allowed to human writings, one while considering him in his person, by his actions and miraculous greatness, and another in the purity and inimitable polish of his language and style, wherein he not only excels all other historians, as Cicero confesses, but peradventure even Cicero himself." Cicero, however, confesses nothing of the kind, and Montaigne is so far wrong. Cæsar was a great favorite with Montaigne, who always speaks of his hero with glowing enthusiasm.

To us who love to make our language clear by the number of words used, and who in writing rarely give ourselves time for condensation, the closely-packed style of Cæsar is at first somewhat difficult of comprehension. It cannot be read otherwise than slowly till the reader's mind is trained by practice to Cæsarean expressions, and then not with rapidity. Three or four adjectives, or more probably participles, joined to substantives in a sentence, are continually intended to convey an amount of information for which, with us, three or four other distinct sentences would be used. It is almost impossible to give the meaning of Cæsar in English without using thrice as many words as he uses. The same may be said of many Latin writers,—perhaps of all; so great was the Roman tendency to condensation, and so great is ours to dilution. But with Cæsar, though every word means much, there are often many words in the same sentence, and the reader is soon compelled to acknowledge that skipping is out of the question, and that quick reading is undesirable.

That which will most strike the ordinary English reader in the narrative of Cæsar is the cruelty of the

Romans,—cruelty of which Cæsar himself is guilty to a frightful extent, and of which he never expresses horror. And yet among his contemporaries he achieved a character for clemency which he has retained to the present day. In describing the character of Cæsar, without reference to that of his contemporaries, it is impossible not to declare him to have been terribly cruel. From bloodthirstiness he slaughtered none; but neither from tenderness did he spare any. All was done for policy; and when policy seemed to him to demand blood, he could, without a scruple,—as far as we can judge, without a pang,—order the destruction of human beings, having no regard to number, sex, age, innocence, or helplessness. Our only excuse for him is that he was a Roman, and that Romans were indifferent to blood. Suicide was with them the common mode of avoiding otherwise inevitable misfortune, and it was natural that men who made light of their own lives should also make light of the lives of others. Of all those with whose names the reader will become acquainted in the following pages, hardly one or two died in their beds. Cæsar and Pompey, the two great ones, were murdered. Dumnorix, the Æduan, was killed by Cæsar's orders. Vercingetorix, the gallantest of the Gauls, was kept alive for years that his death might grace Cæsar's Triumph. Ariovistus, the German, escaped from Cæsar, but we hear soon after of his death, and that the Germans resented it. He doubtless was killed by a Roman weapon. What became of the hunted Ambiorix we do not know, but his brother king Cativolcus poisoned himself with the juice of yew-tree. Crassus, the partner of Cæsar and Pompey in the first triumvirate, was killed by the Parthians. Young Crassus, the son, Cæsar's officer in

Gaul, had himself killed by his own men that he might not fall into the hands of the Parthians, and his head was cut off and sent to his father. Labienus fell at Munda, in the last civil war with Spain. Quintus Cicero, Cæsar's lieutenant, and his greater brother, the orator, and his son, perished in the proscriptions of the second triumvirate. Titurius and Cotta were slaughtered with all their army by Ambiorix. Afranius was killed by Cæsar's soldiers after the last battle in Africa. Petreius was hacked to pieces in amicable contest by King Juba. Varro indeed lived to be an old man, and to write many books. Domitius, who defended Marseilles for Pompey, was killed in the flight after Pharsalia. Trebonius, who attacked Marseilles by land, was killed by a son-in-law of Cicero at Smyrna. Of Decimus Brutus, who attacked Marseilles by sea, one Camillus cut off the head and sent it as a present to Antony. Curio, who attempted to master the province of Africa on behalf of Cæsar, rushed amidst his enemies swords and were slaughtered. King Juba, who conquered him, failing to kill himself, had himself killed by a slave. Attius Varus, who had held the province for Pompey, fell afterwards at Munda. Marc Antony, Cæsar's great lieutenant in the Pharsalian wars, stabbed himself. Cassius Longinus, another lieutenant under Cæsar, was drowned. Scipio, Pompey's partner in greatness at Pharsalia, destroyed himself in Africa. Bibulus, his chief admiral, pined to death. Young Ptolemy, to whom Pompey fled, was drowned in the Nile. The fate of his sister Cleopatra is known to all the world. Pharnaces, Cæsar's enemy in Asia, fell in battle. Cato destroyed himself at Utica. Pompey's eldest son, Cnæus, was caught wounded in Spain and slaughtered. Sextus the younger was killed

some years afterward by one of Antony's soldiers. Brutus and Cassius, the two great conspirators, both committed suicide. But of these two we hear little or nothing in the Commentaries; nor of Augustus Cæsar, who did contrive to live in spite of all the bloodshed through which he had waded to the throne. Among the whole number there are not above three, if so many, who died fairly fighting in battle.

The above is a list of the names of men of mark,—of warrior's chiefly, of men who, with their eyes open, knowing what was before them, went out to encounter danger for certain purposes. The bloody catalogue is so complete, so nearly comprises all whose names are mentioned, that it strikes the reader with almost a comic horror. But when we come to the slaughter of whole towns, the devastation of country effected purposely that men and women might starve, to the abandonment of the old, the young, and the tender, that they might perish on the hillsides, to the mutilation of crowds of men, to the burning of cities told us in a passing word, to the drowning of many thousands,—mentioned as we should mention the destruction of a brood of rats,—the comedy is all over, and the heart becomes sick. Then it is that we remember that the coming of Christ has changed all things, and that men now,—though terrible things have been done since Christ came to us,—are not as men were in the days of Cæsar.

## CHAPTER II.

FIRST BOOK OF THE WAR IN GAUL.—CÆSAR DRIVES  
FIRST THE SWISS AND THEN THE GERMANS OUT OF  
GAUL.—B. C. 58.

It has been remarked in the preceding chapter that Cæsar does not appear to have received any commission for the subjugation of Gaul when he took military charge of his three provinces. The Gauls were still feared in Rome, and it was his duty to see that they did not make their way over the Alps into the Roman territory. It was also his duty to protect from invasion, and also from rebellion, that portion of Gaul which had already been constituted a Roman province, but in which the sympathies of the people were still rather with their old brethren than with their new masters. The experience, however, which we have of great and encroaching empires tells us how probable it is that the protection of that which the strong already holds should lead to the grasping of more, till at last all has been grasped. It is thus that our own empire in India has grown. It was thus that the Spanish empire grew in America. It is thus that the empire of the United States is now growing. It was thus that Prussia, driven, as we all remember, by the necessity of self-preservation,



he, Cæsar, who wrote the Commentary, were not the Cæsar of whom he is writing. Not unfrequently he speaks strongly in praise of himself; but as there is no humility in his tone, so also is there no pride, even when he praises himself. He never seems to boast, though he tells us of his own exploits as he does of those of his generals and centurions. Without any diffidence he informs us now and again how, at the end of this or that campaign, a "supplication," or public festival and thanksgiving for his victories, was decreed in Rome, on the hearing of the news,—to last for fifteen or twenty days, as the case might be.

Of his difficulties at home,—the political difficulties with which he had to contend,—he says never a word. And yet at times they must have been very harassing. We hear from other sources that during these wars in Gaul his conduct was violently reprobated in Rome, in that he had, with the utmost cruelty, attacked and crushed states supposed to be in amity with Rome, and that it was once even proposed to give him up to the enemy as a punishment for grievous treachery to the enemy. Had it been so resolved by the Roman Senate,—had such a law been enacted,—the power to carry out the law would have been wanted. It was easier to grant a "supplication" for twenty days than to stop his career after his legions had come to know him.

Nor is there very much said by Cæsar of his strategic difficulties; though now and then, especially when his ships are being knocked about on the British coast, and again when the iron of his heel has so bruised the Gauls that they all turn against him in one body under Ver-  
cingetorix, the reader is allowed to see that he is pressed hard enough. But it is his rule to tell the

thing he means to do, the way he does it, and the completeness of the result, in the fewest possible words. If any student of the literature of battles would read first Cæsar's seven books of the Gallic War, and then Mr. Kinglake's first four volumes of the 'Invasion of the Crimea,' he would be able to compare two most wonderful examples of the dexterous use of words, in the former of which the narrative is told with the utmost possible brevity, and in the latter with almost the utmost possible prolixity. And yet each narrative is equally clear, and each equally distinguished by so excellent an arrangement of words, that the reader is forced to acknowledge that the story is told to him by a great master.

In praising others,—his lieutenants, his soldiers, and occasionally his enemies,—Cæsar is often enthusiastic, though the praise is conferred by a word or two,—is given, perhaps, simply in an epithet added on for that purpose to a sentence planned with a wholly different purpose. Of blame he is very sparing; so much so, that it almost seems that he looked upon certain imperfections, in regard even to faith as well as valor or prudence, as necessary to humanity, and pardonable because of their necessity. He can tell of the absolute destruction of a legion through the folly and perhaps cowardice of one of his lieutenants, without heaping a word of reproach on the name of the unfortunate. He can relate how a much-favored tribe fell off from their faith again and again without expressing anger at their faithlessness, and can explain how they were,—hardly forgiven, but received again as friends,—because it suited him so to treat them. But again he can tell us, without apparently a quiver of the pen, how he could devote to destruction a city with all its women and all



its children, so that other cities might know what would come to them if they did not yield and obey, and become vassals to the godlike hero in whose hands Providence had placed their lives and their possessions.

It appears that Cæsar never failed to believe in himself. He is far too simple in his language, and too conscious of his own personal dignity, to assert that he has never been worsted. But his very simplicity seems to convey the assurance that such cannot ultimately be the result of any campaign in which he is engaged. He seems to imply that victory attends him so certainly that it would be futile in any case to discuss its probability. He feared no one, and was therefore the cause of awe to others. He could face his own legions when they would not obey his call to arms, and reduce them to obedience by a word. Lucan, understanding his character well, says of him that "he deserved to be feared, for he feared nothing;" "*meruitque timeri Nil metuens.*" He writes of himself as we might imagine some god would write who knew that his divine purpose must of course prevail, and who would therefore never be in the way of entertaining a doubt. With Cæsar there is always this godlike simplicity, which makes his "*Veni, vidi, vici,*" the natural expression of his mind as to his own mode of action. The same thing is felt in the very numerous but very brief records of the punishments which he inflicted. Cities are left desolate, as it were with a wave of his hand, but he hardly deigns to say that his own hand has even been waved. He tells us of one Acco who had opposed him, that, "*Graviore sententiâ pronunciatâ,*"—as though there had been some jury to pronounce this severe sentence, which was in fact pro-

nounced only by himself, Cæsar,—he inflicted punishment on him “more majorum.” We learn from other sources that this punishment consisted in being stripped naked, confined by the neck in a cleft stick, and then being flogged to death. In the next words, having told us in half a sentence that he had made the country too hot to hold the fugitive accomplices of the tortured chief, he passes on into Italy with the majestic step of one much too great to dwell long on these small but disagreeable details. And we feel that he is too great.

It has been already said that the great proconsular wolf was not long in hearing that a lamb had come down to drink of his stream. The Helvetii, or Swiss, as we call them,—those tribes which lived on the Lake Lemán, and among the hills and valleys to the north of the lake,—had made up their minds that they were inhabiting but a poor sort of country, and that they might considerably better themselves by leaving their mountains and going into some part of Gaul, in which they might find themselves stronger than the existing tribes, and might take possession of the fat of the land. In doing so, their easiest way out of their own country would lie by the Rhone, where it now runs through Geneva into France. But in taking this route the Swiss would be obliged to pass over a corner of the Roman province. Here was a case of the lamb troubling the waters with a vengeance. When this was told Cæsar,—that these Swiss intended, “*facere iter per Provinciam nostram*”—“to do their traveling through our province,”—he hurried over the Alps into Gaul, and came to Geneva as fast as he could travel.

He begins his first book by a geographical definition of Gaul, which no doubt was hardly accurate, but which

gives us a singularly clear idea of that which Cæsar desired to convey. In speaking of Gallia he intends to signify the whole country from the outflow of the Rhine into the ocean down to the Pyrenees, and then eastward to the Rhone, to the Swiss mountains, and the borders of the Roman province. This he divides into three parts, telling us that the Belgians inhabited the part north of the Seine and Marne, the people of Aquitania the south part of the Garonne, and the Gauls or Celts the intermediate territory. Having so far described the scene of his action, he rushes off at once to the dreadful sin of the Swiss emigrants in desiring to pass through "our province."

He has but one legion in Further Gaul,—that is, in the Roman province on the further side of the Alps from Rome; and therefore, when ambassadors come to him from the Swiss, asking permission to go through the corner of land, and promising that they will do no harm in their passage, he temporizes with them. He can't give them an answer just then, but must think of it. They must come back to him by a certain day,—when he will have more soldiers ready. Of course he refuses. The Swiss make some slight attempt, but soon give that matter up in despair. There is another way by which they can get out of their mountains,—through the territory of a people called Sequani; and for doing this they obtain leave. But Cæsar knows how injurious the Swiss lambs will be to him and his wolves, should they succeed in getting round to the back of his province,—that Roman province which left the name of Provence in modern France till France refused to be divided any longer into provinces. And he is, moreover, invited by certain friends of the Roman Republic, called the *Ædui*, to come and stop these rough Swiss

travelers. He is always willing to help the *Ædui*, although these *Ædui* are a fickle, inconstant people,—and he is, above all things, willing to get to war. So he comes upon the rear of the Swiss when three portions of the people have passed the river *Arar* (*Saone*), and one portion is still behind. This hindermost tribe,—for the wretches were all of one tribe or mountain canton,—he sets upon and utterly destroys; and on this occasion congratulates himself on having avenged himself upon the slayers of the grandfather of his father-in-law.

There can be nothing more remarkable in history than this story of the attempted emigration of the *Helvetii*, which *Cæsar* tells us without the expression of any wonder. The whole people made up their minds that, as their borders were narrow, their numbers increasing, and their courage good, they would go forth,—men, women, and children,—and seek other homes. We read constantly of the emigrations of people,—of the Northmen from the north covering the Southern plains, of Danes and Jutes entering Britain, of men from Scandinavia coming down across the Rhine, and the like. We know that after this fashion the world has become peopled. But we picture to ourselves generally a concourse of warriors going forth and leaving behind them homes and friends, to whom they may or may not return. With these Swiss wanderers there was to be no return. All that they could not take with them they destroyed, burning their houses, and burning even their corn, so that there should be no means of turning their steps backward. They do make considerable progress, getting as far into France as *Autun*,—three-fourths of them at least getting so far; but near this they are brought

to an engagement by Cæsar, who outgenerals them on a hill. The prestige of the Romans had not as yet established itself in these parts, and the Swiss nearly have the best of it. Cæsar owns, as he does not own again above once or twice, that the battle between them was very long, and for long very doubtful. But at last the poor Helvetii are driven in slaughter. Cæsar, however, is not content that they should simply fly. He forces them back upon their old territory,—upon their burnt houses and devastated fields,—lest certain Germans should come and live there, and make themselves disagreeable. And they go back;—so many, at least, go back as are not slain in the adventure. With great attempt at accuracy, Cæsar tells us that 368,000 human beings went out on the expedition, and that 110,000, or less than a third, found their way back. Of those that perished, many hecatombs had been offered up to the shade of his father-in-law's grandfather.

Hereupon the Gauls begin to see how great a man is Cæsar. He tells us that no sooner was that war with the Swiss finished than nearly all the tribes of Gallia send to congratulate him. And one special tribe, those Ædui,—of whom we hear a great deal, and whom we never like because they are thoroughly anti-Gallican in all their doings till they think that Cæsar is really in trouble, and then they turn upon him,—have to beg of him a great favor. Two tribes,—the Ædui, whose name seems to have left no trace in France, and the Arverni, whom we still know in Auvergne,—have been long contending for the upper hand; whereupon the Arverni and their friends the Sequani have called in the assistance of certain Germans from across the Rhine. It went badly then

with the Ædui. And now one of their kings, named Divitiacus, implores the help of Cæsar. Would Cæsar be kind enough to expel these horrid Germans, and get back the hostages, and free them from a burdensome dominion, and put things a little to rights? And, indeed, not only were the Ædui suffering from these Germans, and their king, Ariovistus; it is going still worse with the Sequani, who had called them in. In fact, Ariovistus was an intolerable nuisance to that eastern portion of Gaul. Would Cæsar be kind enough to drive him out? Cæsar consents, and then we are made to think of another little fable,—of the prayer which the horse made to the man for assistance in his contest with the stag, and of the manner in which the man got upon the horse, and never got down again. Cæsar was not slow to mount, and when once in the saddle, certainly did not mean to leave it.

Cæsar tells us his reasons for undertaking this commission. The Ædui had often been called “brothers” and “cousins” by the Roman Senate; and it was not fitting that men who had been so honored should be domineered over by Germans. And then, unless these marauding Germans could be stopped, they would fall into the habit of coming across the Rhine, and at last might get into the Province, and by that route into Italy itself. And Ariovistus himself was personally so arrogant a man that the thing must be made to cease. So Cæsar sends ambassadors to Ariovistus, and invites the barbarian to a meeting. The barbarian will not come to the meeting. If he wanted to see the Roman, he would go to the Roman: if the Roman wants to see him, the Roman may come to him. Such is the reply of Ariovistus. Ambassadors pass between them, and there is a good deal of argument, in which



the barbarian has the best of it. Cæsar, with his god-like simplicity, scorns not to give the barbarian the benefit of his logic. Ariovistus reminds Cæsar that the Romans have been in the habit of governing the tribes conquered by them after their fashion, without interference from him, Ariovistus; and that the Germans claim and mean to exercise the same right. He goes on to say that he is willing enough to live in amity with the Romans; but will Cæsar be kind enough to remember that the Germans are a people unconquered in war, trained to the use of arms, and how hardy he might judge when he was told that for fourteen years they had not slept under a roof? In the meantime other Gauls were complaining, and begging for assistance. The Treviri, people of the country where Treves now stands, are being harassed by the terrible yellow-haired Suevi, who at this time seem to have possessed nearly the whole of Prussia as it now exists on the further side of the Rhine, and who had the same desire to come westward that the Prussians have evinced since. And a people called the Harudes, from the Danube, are also harassing the poor Ædui. Cæsar, looking at these things, sees that unless he is quick, the northern and southern Germans may join their forces. He gets together his commissariat, and flies at Ariovistus very quickly.

Throughout all his campaigns, Cæsar, as did Napoleon afterwards, effected everything by celerity. He preaches to us no sermon on the subject, favors us with no disquisition as to the value of despatch in war, but constantly tells us that he moved all his army "*magnis itineribus*"—by very rapid marches; that he went on with his work night and day, and took precautions "*magno opere*,"—with much labor and all



his care,—to be beforehand with the enemy. In this instance Ariovistus tries to reach a certain town of the poor Sequani, then called Vesontio, now known to us as Besancon,—the same name, but very much altered. It consisted of a hill, or natural fortress, almost surrounded by a river, or natural fosse. There is nothing, says Cæsar, so useful in a war as the possession of a place thus naturally strong. Therefore he hurries on and gets before Ariovistus, and occupies the town. The reader already begins to feel that Cæsar is destined to divine success. The reader indeed knows that beforehand, and expects nothing worse for Cæsar than hairbreadth escapes. But the Romans themselves had not as yet the same confidence in him. Tidings are brought to him at Vesontio that his men are terribly afraid of the Germans. And so, no doubt, they were. These Romans, though by the art of war they had been made fine soldiers,—though they had been trained in the Eastern conquests and the Punic wars, and invasions of all nations around them,—were nevertheless, up to this day, greatly afraid even of the Gauls. The coming of the Gauls into Italy had been a source of terror to them ever since the days of Brennus. And the Germans were worse than the Gauls. The boast made by Ariovistus that his men never slept beneath a roof was not vain or useless. They were a horrid, hirsute, yellow-haired people, the flashing aspect of whose eyes could hardly be endured by an Italian. The fear is so great that the soldiers “sometimes could not refrain even from tears;”—“neque interdum lacrimas tenere poterant.” When we remember what these men became after they had been a while with Cæsar, their bluddering awe of the Germans strikes us as almost comic. And we are re-

minded that the Italians of those days were, as they are now, more prone to show the outward signs of emotion than is thought to be decorous with men in more northern climes. We can hardly realize the idea of soldiers crying from fear. Cæsar is told by his centurions that so great is this feeling, that the men will probably refuse to take up their arms when called upon to go out and fight; whereupon he makes a speech to all his captains and lieutenants, full of boasting, full of scorn, full, no doubt, of falsehood, but using a bit of truth whenever the truth could aid him. We know that among other great gifts Cæsar had the gift of persuasion. From his tongue, also, as from Nestor's, could flow "words sweeter than honey,"—or sharper than steel. At any rate, if others will not follow him, his tenth legion, he knows, will be true to him. He will go forth with that one legion,—if necessary, with that legion of true soldiers, and with no others. Though he had been at his work but a short time, he already had his picked men, his guards, his favorite regiments, his tenth legion; and he knew well how to use their superiority and valor for the creation of those virtues in others.

Then Ariovistus sends ambassadors, and declares that he now is willing to meet Cæsar. Let them meet on a certain plain, each bringing only his cavalry guard. Ariovistus suggests that foot-soldiers might be dangerous, knowing that Cæsar's foot-soldiers would be Romans, and that his cavalry are Gauls. Cæsar agrees, but takes men out of his own tenth legion, mounted on the horses of the less-trusted allies. The accounts of these meetings, and the arguments which we are told are used on this and that side, are very interesting. We are bound to remember that Cæsar is telling the story for both sides, but we feel that he

tries to tell it fairly. Ariovistus had very little to say to Cæsar's demands, but a great deal to say about his own exploits. The meeting, however, was broken up by an attack made by the Germans on Cæsar's mounted guard, and Cæsar retires,—not, however, before he has explained to Ariovistus his grand idea of the protection due by Rome to her allies. Then Ariovistus proposes another meeting, which Cæsar declines to attend, sending, however, certain ambassadors. Ariovistus at once throws the ambassadors into chains, and then there is nothing for it but a fight.

The details of all these battles cannot be given within our short limits, and there is nothing special in this battle to tempt us to dwell upon it. Cæsar describes to us the way in which the German cavalry and infantry fought together, the footmen advancing from amidst the horsemen, and then returning for protection. His own men fight well, and the Germans, in spite of their flashing eyes, are driven headlong in a rout back to the Rhine. Ariovistus succeeds in getting over the river and saving himself, but he has to leave his two daughters behind, and his two wives. The two wives and one of the daughters are killed; the other daughter is taken prisoner. Cæsar had sent as one of his ambassadors to the German, a certain dear friend of his, who, as we heard before, was, with his comrade, at once subjected to chains. In the flight this ambassador is recovered. “Which thing, indeed, gave Cæsar not less satisfaction than the victory itself,—in that he saw one of the honestest men of the Province of Gaul, his own familiar friend and guest, rescued from the hands of his enemies and restored to him. Nor did Fortune diminish this gratification by any calamity inflicted on the man. Thrice, as he him-

self told the tale, had it been decided by lot in his own presence, whether he should then be burned alive or reserved for another time." So Cæsar tells the story, and we like him for his enthusiasm, and are glad to hear that the comrade ambassador also is brought back.

The yellow-haired Suevi, when they hear of all this, desist from their invasion on the lower Rhine, and hurry back into their own country, not without misfortunes on the road. So great already, is Cæsar's name, that tribes, acting as it were on his side, dare to attack even the Suevi. Then, in his "Veni, vidi, vici" style, he tells us that, having in one summer finished off two wars, he is able to put his army into winter quarters even before the necessary time, so that he himself may go into his other Gaul across the Alps,—"ad conventus agendos,"—to hold some kind of session or assizes for the Government of his province, and especially to collect more soldiers,

## CHAPTER III.

SECOND BOOK OF THE WAR IN GAUL.—CÆSAR SUBDUES  
THE BELGIAN TRIBES.—B.C. 57.

THE man had got on the horse's back, but the horse had various disagreeable enemies in attacking whom the man might be very useful, and the horse was therefore not as yet anxious to unseat his rider. Would Cæsar be so good as to go and conquer the Belgian tribes? Cæsar is not slow in finding reasons for so doing. The Belgians are conspiring together against him. They think that as all Gaul has been reduced,—or “pacified,” as Cæsar calls it,—the Roman conqueror will certainly bring his valor to bear upon them, and that they had better be ready. Cæsar suggests that it would no doubt be felt by them as a great grievance that a Roman army should remain all the winter so near to them. In this way, and governed by these considerations, the Belgian lambs disturb the stream very sadly, and the wolf has to look to it. He collects two more legions, and, as soon as the earth brings forth the food necessary for his increased number of men and horses, he hurries off against these Belgian tribes of Northern Gallia. Of these, one tribe, the Remi, immediately send word to him that they are not wicked lambs like the others; they have not

touched the waters. All the other Belgians, say the Remi, and with them a parcel of Germans, are in a conspiracy together. Even their very next-door neighbors, their brothers and cousins, the Suessiones, are wicked; but they, the Remi, have steadily refused even to sniff at the stream, which they acknowledge to be the exclusive property of the good wolf. Would the wolf be kind enough to come and take possession of them and all their belongings, and allow them to be the humblest of his friends? We come to hate these Remi, as we do the Ædui; but they are wise in their generation, and escape much of the starvation and massacring and utter ruin to which the other tribes are subjected. Among almost all these so-called Belgian tribes we find the modern names which are familiar to us. Rheims is in the old country of the Remi, Soissons in that of the Suessiones. Beauvais represents the Bellovaci, Amiens the Ambiani, Arras the Atrebatas, Treves the Treviri,—as has been pointed out before. Silva Arduenna is, of course, the Forest of Ardennes.

The campaign is commenced by an attack made by the other Belgians on those unnatural Remi who have gone over to the Romans. There is a town of theirs, Bibrax, now known, or rather not known, as Bievre, and here the Remi are besieged by their brethren. When Bibrax is on the point of falling,—and we can imagine what would then have been the condition of the townsmen,—they send to Cæsar, who is only eight miles distant. Unless Cæsar will help, they cannot endure any longer such onslaught as is made on them. Cæsar, having bided his time, of course sends help, and the poor besieging Belgians fall into inextricable confusion. They agree to go home, each to his own country, and from thence to proceed to the defence of any tribe



which Cæsar might attack. "So," says Cæsar, as he ends the story of this little affair, "without any danger on our part, our men killed as great a number of theirs as the space of the day would admit." When the sun set, and not till then, came an end to the killing,—such having been the order of Cæsar.

That these Belgians had really formed any intention of attacking the Roman province, or even any Roman ally, there is no other proof than that Cæsar tells us that they had all conspired. But whatever might be their sin, or what the lack of sin on their part, he is determined to go on with the war till he has subjugated them altogether. On the very next day he attacks the Suessiones, and gets as far as Noviodunum,—Noyons. The people there, when they see how terrible are his engines of war, give up all idea of defending themselves, and ask for terms. The Bellovaci do the same. At the instigation of his friends the Remi, he spares the one city, and, to please the Ædui, the other. But he takes away all their arms, and exacts hostages. From the Bellovaci, because they have a name as a powerful people, he takes 600 hostages. Throughout all these wars it becomes a matter of wonder to us what Cæsar did with all these hostages, and how he maintained them. It was, however, no doubt clearly understood that they would be killed if the town, or state, or tribe by which they were given should misbehave, or in any way thwart the great conqueror.

The Ambiani come next, and the ancestors of our intimate friends at Amiens soon give themselves up. The next to them are the Nervii, a people far away to the north, where Lille now is and a considerable portion of Flanders. Of these Cæsar had heard wonderful travelers' tales. They were a people who admitted no



dealers among them, being in this respect very unlike their descendants, the Belgians of to-day; they drank no wine, and indulged in no luxuries, lest their martial valor should be diminished. They send no ambassadors to Cæsar, and resolve to hold their own if they can. They trust solely to infantry in battle, and know nothing of horses. Against the cavalry of other nations, however, they are wont to protect themselves by artificial hedges, which they make almost as strong as walls.

Cæsar in attacking the Nervii had eight legions, and he tells us how he advanced against them "*consuetudine suâ*,"—after his usual fashion. For some false information had been given to the Nervii on this subject, which brought them into considerable trouble. He sent on first his cavalry, then six legions, the legions consisting solely of foot-soldiers; after these all the baggage, commissariat, and burden of the army, comprising the materials necessary for sieges; and lastly, the two other legions, which had been latest enrolled. It may be as well to explain here that the legion in the time of Cæsar consisted on paper of six thousand heavy-armed foot-soldiers. There were ten cohorts in a legion, and six centuries, or six hundred men, in each cohort. It may possibly be that, as with our regiments, the numbers were frequently not full. Eight full legions would thus have formed an army consisting of 48,000 infantry. The exact number of men under his orders Cæsar does not mention here or elsewhere.

According to his own showing, Cæsar is hurried into a battle before he knows where he is. Cæsar, he says, had everything to do himself, all at the same time,—to unfurl the standard of battle, to give the signal with the trumpet, to get back the soldiers from their work, to call back some who had gone to a distance for stuff

to make a rampart, to draw up the army, to address the men, and then to give the word. In that matter of oratory, he only tells them to remember their old valor. The enemy was so close upon them, and so ready for fighting, that they could scarcely put on their helmets and take their shields out of their cases. So great was the confusion that the soldiers could not get to their own ranks, but had to fight as they stood, under any flag that was nearest to them. There were so many things against them, and especially those thick artificial hedges, which prevented them even from seeing, that it was impossible for them to fight according to any method, and in consequence there were vicissitudes of fortune. One is driven to feel that on this occasion Cæsar was caught napping. The Nervii did at times and places seem to be getting the best of it. The ninth and tenth legions pursue one tribe into a river, and then they have to fight them again, and drive them out of the river. The eleventh and eighth, having put to flight another tribe, are attacked on the very river-banks. The twelfth and the seventh have their hands equally full, when Boduognatus, the Nervian chief, makes his way into the very middle of the Roman camp. So great is the confusion that the Treviri, who had joined Cæsar on this occasion as allies, although reputed the bravest of the cavalry of Gaul, run away home, and declare that the Romans are conquered. Cæsar, however, comes to the rescue, and saves his army on this occasion by personal prowess. When he saw how it was going,—“*rem esse in angusto*,”—how the thing had got itself into the very narrowest neck of a difficulty, he seizes a shield from a common soldier,—having come there himself with no shield,—and rushes into the fight. When the soldiers saw him, and saw, too, that

what they did was done in his sight, they fought anew, and the onslaught of the enemy was checked.

Perhaps readers will wish that they could know how much of all this is exactly true. It reads as though it were true. We cannot in these days understand how one brave man at such a moment should be so much more effective than another, how he should be known personally to the soldiers of an army so large, how Cæsar should have known the names of the centurions,—for he tells us that he addresses them by name;—and yet it reads like truth; and the reader feels that as Cæsar would hardly condescend to boast, so neither would he be constrained by any modern feeling of humility from telling any truth of himself. It is as though Minerva were to tell us of some descent which she made among the Trojans. The Nervii fight on, but of course they are driven in flight. The nation is all but destroyed, so that the very name can but hardly remain;—so at least we are told here, though we hear of them again as a tribe by no means destroyed or powerless. When out of six hundred senators there are but three senators left, when from sixty thousand fighting men the army has been reduced to scarcely five hundred, Cæsar throws the mantle of his mercy over the survivors. He allows them even to go and live in their own homes, and forbids their neighbors to harass them. There can be no doubt that Cæsar nearly got the worst of it in this struggle, and we may surmise that he learned a lesson which was of service to him in subsequent campaigns.

But there are still certain Aduatici to be disposed of before the summer is over,—people who had helped the Nervii,—who have a city of their own, and who

live somewhere in the present Namur district.\* At first they fight a little round the walls of their town; but when they see what terrible instruments Cæsar has, by means of which to get at them over their very walls,—how he can build up a great turret at a distance, which, at that distance, is ludicrous to them, but which he brings near to them, so that it overhangs them, from which to harass them with arrows and stones, and against which, so high is it, they have no defence—then they send out and beg for mercy. Surely, they say, Cæsar and the Romans must have more than human power. They will give up everything, if only Cæsar out of his mercy will leave to them their arms. They are always at war with all their neighbors; and where would they be without arms?

Cæsar replies. Merits of their own they have none. How could a tribe have merits against which Cæsar was at war? Nevertheless, such being his custom, he will admit them to some terms of grace if they surrender before his battering-ram has touched their walls. But as for their arms, surely they must be joking with him. Of course their arms must be surrendered. What he had done for the Nervii he would do for them. He would tell their neighbors not to

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\* These people were the descendants of those Cimbri who, half a century before, had caused such woe to Rome! The Cimbri, we are told, had gone forth from their lands, and had been six times victorious over Roman armies, taking possession of "our Province," and threatening Italy and Rome. The whole empire of the Republic had been in danger, but was at last saved by the courage, skill, and rapidity of Marius. In going forth from their country they had left a remnant behind with such of their possessions as they could not carry with them; and these Aduatici were the children and grandchildren of that remnant. Cæsar doubtless remembered it all.

hurt them. They agree, and throw their arms into the outside ditch of the town, but not quite all their arms. A part,—a third,—are cunningly kept back; and when Cæsar enters the town, they who have kept their arms, and others unarmed, try to escape from the town. They fight, and some thousands are slain. Others are driven back, and these are sold for slaves. Who, we wonder, could have been the purchasers, and at what price on that day was a man to be bought in the city of the Aduatici?

Then Cæsar learns through his lieutenant, young Crassus, the son of his colleague in the triumvirate, that all the Belgian states, from the Scheldt to the Bay of Biscay, have been reduced beneath the yoke of the Roman people. The Germans, too, send ambassadors to him, so convinced are they that to fight against him is of no avail,—so wonderful an idea of this last war has pervaded all the tribes of barbarians. But Cæsar is in a hurry, and can hear no ambassadors now. He wants to get into Italy, and they must come again to him next summer.

For all which glorious doings a public thanksgiving of fifteen days is decreed, as soon as the news is heard in Rome.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THIRD BOOK OF THE WAR IN GAUL.—CÆSAR SUBDUES THE WESTERN TRIBES OF GAUL.—B. C. 56.

IN the first few lines of the third book we learn that Cæsar had an eye not only for conquest, but for the advantages of conquest also. When he went into Italy at the end of the last campaign, he sent one Galba, whose descendant became emperor after Nero, with the twelfth legion, to take up his winter quarters in the upper valley of the Rhone, in order that an easier traffic might be opened to traders passing over the Alps in and out of Northern Italy. It seems that the passage used was that of the Great St. Bernard, and Galba placed himself with his legion at that junction of the valley which we all know so well as Martigny. Here, however, he was attacked furiously in his camp by the inhabitants of the valley, who probably objected to being dictated to as to the amount of toll to be charged upon the traveling traders, and was very nearly destroyed. The Romans, however, at last, when they had neither weapons nor food left for maintaining their camp, resolved to cut their way through their enemies. This they did so effectually that they slaughtered more than ten thousand men, and the other twenty thousand of Swiss warriors all took to flight! Nevertheless



Galba thought it as well to leave that inhospitable region, in which it was almost impossible to find food for the winter, and took himself down the valley and along the lake to the Roman province. He made his winter-quarters among the Allobroges, who belonged to the province,—a people living just south of the present Lyons. How the Allobroges liked it we are not told, but we know that they were then very faithful, although in former days they had given great trouble. Their position made faith to Rome almost a necessity. Whether, in such a position, Cæsar's lieutenants paid their way, and bought their corn at market price, we do not know. It was Cæsar's rule, no doubt, to make the country on which his army stood support his army.

When the number of men whom Cæsar took with him into countries hitherto unknown to him or his army is considered, and the apparently reckless audacity with which he did so, it must be acknowledged that he himself says very little about his difficulties. He must constantly have had armies for which to provide twice as large as our Crimean army,—probably as large as the united force of the English and French in the Crimea; and he certainly could not bring with him what he wanted in ships. The road from Balaclava up to the heights over Sebastopol, we know, was very bad; but it was short. The road from the foot of the Alps in the Roman province to the countries with which we were dealing in the last chapter could not, we should say, have been very good two thousand years ago, and it certainly was very long;—nearly a hundred miles for Cæsar to every single one of those that were so terrible to us in the Crimea. Cæsar, however, carried but little with him beyond his arms and implements of war, and of those the heaviest he



no doubt made as he went. The men had an allowance of corn per day, besides so much pay. We are told that the pay before Cæsar's time was 100 *asses* a month for the legionaries,—the *as* being less than a penny,—and that this was doubled by Cæsar. We can conceive that the money troubled him comparatively slightly, but that the finding of the daily corn and forage for so large a host of men and horses must have been very difficult. He speaks of the difficulty often, but never with that despair which was felt as to the roasting of our coffee in the Crimea. We hear of his waiting till forage should have grown, and sometimes there are necessary considerations “*de re frumentariâ*,”—about that great general question of provisions; but of crushing difficulties very little is said, and of bad roads not a word. One great advantage Cæsar certainly had over Lord Raglan;—he was his own special correspondent. Coffee his men certainly did not get; but if their corn were not properly roasted for them, and if, as would be natural, the men grumbled, he had with him no licensed collector of grumbles to make public the sufferings of his men.

And now, when this affair of Galba's had been finished,—when Cæsar, as he tells us, really did think that all Gaul was “*pacatâ*,” tranquilized, or at least subdued,—the Belgians conquered, the Germans driven off, those Swiss fellows cut to pieces in the valley of the Rhone; when he thought that he might make a short visit into that other province of his, Illyricum, so that he might see what that was like,—he is told that another war has sprung up in Gaul! Young Crassus, with that necessity which of course was on him of providing winter food for the seventh legion which he had been ordered to take into Aquitania, has been obliged to send

out for corn into the neighboring countries. Of course a well-instructed young general, such as was Crassus, had taken hostages before he sent his men out among strange and wild barbarians. But in spite of that, the Veneti, a maritime people of ancient Brittany, just in that country of the Morbihan whither we now go to visit the works of the Druids at Carnac and Locmariaker, absolutely detained his two ambassadors;—so called afterwards, though in his first mention of them Cæsar names them as præfects and tribunes of the soldiers. Vannes, the capitol of the department of the Morbihan, gives us a trace of the name of this tribe. The Veneti, who were powerful in ships, did not see why they should give their corn to Crassus. Cæsar, when he hears that ambassadors,—sacred ambassadors,—have been stopped, is filled with shame and indignation, and hurries off himself to look after the affair, having, as we may imagine, been able to see very little of Illyricum.

This horror of Cæsar in regard to his ambassadors,—in speaking of which he alludes to what the Gauls themselves felt when they came to understand what a thing they had done in making ambassadors prisoners,—“legatos,”—a name that has always been held sacred and inviolate among all nations,—is very great, and makes him feel that he must really be in earnest. We are reminded of the injunctions, printed in Spanish, which the Spaniards distributed among the Indians of the continent, in the countries now called Venezuela and New Granada, explaining to the people, who knew nothing of Spanish or of printing, how they were bound to obey the orders of a distant king, who had the authority of a more distant Pope, who again,—so they claimed,—was delegated by a more distant God. The pain of history consists in the injustice of the wolf

towards the lamb, joined to the conviction that thus, and no otherwise, could the lamb be brought to better than a sheepish mode of existence! But Cæsar was in earnest.\* The following is a translation of the tenth section of this book; "There were these difficulties in carrying on the war which we have above shown."—He alludes to the maritime capacities of the people whom he desires to conquer.—"Many things, nevertheless, urged Cæsar on to this war;—the wrongs of those Roman knights who had been detained, rebellion set on foot after an agreed surrender,"—that any such surrender had been made we do not hear, though we do hear, incidentally, that Crassus had taken hostages;—"a falling off from alliance after hostages had been given; conspiracy among so many tribes; and then this first consideration, that if this side of the country were disregarded, the other tribes might learn to think that they might take the same liberty. Then, when he bethought himself that, as the Gauls were prone to rebellion, and were quickly and easily excited to war, and that all men, moreover, are fond of liberty and hate a condition of subjection, he resolved that it would be well, rather than that other states should conspire,"—and to avoid the outbreak on behalf of freedom which might thus probably be made,—"that his army should be divided, and scattered about more

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\* And Cæsar was no doubt indignant as well as earnest, though, perhaps, irrational in his indignation. We know how sacred was held to be the person of the Roman citizen, and remember Cicero's patriotic declaration, "*Facinus est vinciri civem Romanum,—scelus verberari;*" and again, the words which Horace puts into the mouth of Regulus when he asserts that the Roman soldier must be lost for ever in his shame, and useless, "*Qui lora restrictis lacertis Sensit iners timuitque mortem.*"

widely." Treating all Gaul as a chess-board, he sends round to provide that the Treviri should be kept quiet. Readers will remember how far Treves is distant from the extremities of Brittany. The Belgians are to be looked to, lest they should rise and come and help. The Germans are to be prevented from crossing the Rhine. Labienus, who, during the Gallic wars, was Cæsar's general highest in trust, is to see to all this. Crassus is to go back into Aquitania and keep the south quiet. Titurius Sabinus, destined afterwards to a sad end, is sent with three legions,—eighteen thousand men,—among the neighboring tribes of Northern Brittany and Normandy. "Young" Decimus Brutus,—Cæsar speaks of him with that kind affection which the epithet conveys, and we remember, as we read, that this Brutus appears afterwards in history as one of Cæsar's slayers, in conjunction with his greater namesake,—young Decimus Brutus. the future conspirator in Rome, has confided to him the fleet which is to destroy these much less guilty distant conspirators, and Cæsar himself takes the command of his own legions on the spot. All this is told in fewer words than are here used in describing the telling, and the reader feels that he has to do with a mighty man, whose eyes are everywhere, and of whom an ordinary enemy would certainly say, Surely this is no man, but a god.

He tells us how great was the effect of his own presence on the shore, though the battle was carried on under young Brutus at sea. "What remained of the conflict," he says, after describing their manœuvres, "depended on valor, in which our men were far away the superior; and this was more especially true because the affair was carried on so plainly in the sight of Cæsar and the whole army that no brave deed could

pass unobserved. For all the hills and upper lands, from whence the view down upon the sea was close, were covered by the army."

Of course he conquers the Veneti and other sea-going tribes, even on their own element. Whereupon they give themselves and all their belongings up to Cæsar. Cæsar, desirous that the rights of ambassadors shall hereafter be better respected among barbarians, determines that he must use a little severity. "*Gravius vindicandum statuit;*"—"he resolved that the offence should be expiated with more than ordinary punishment." Consequently, he kills all the senate, and sells all the other men as slaves! The pithy brevity, the unapologetic dignity of the sentence, as he pronounced it and tells it to us, is heartrending, but, at this distance of time, delightful also. "*Itaque, omni senatu necato, reliquos sub coronâ vendidit.*"—"therefore, all the senate having been slaughtered, he sold the other citizens with chaplets on their heads;"—it being the Roman custom so to mark captives in war intended for sale. We can see him as he waves his hand and passes on. Surely he must be a god!

His generals in this campaign are equally successful. One Viridovix, a Gaul up in the Normandy country,—somewhere about Avranches or St. Lo, we may imagine,—is entrapped into a fight, and destroyed with his army. Aquitania surrenders herself to Crassus, after much fighting, and gives up her arms.

Then Cæsar reflects that the Morini and the Menapii had as yet never bowed their heads to him. Boulogne and Calais stand in the now well-known territory of the Morina, but the Menapii lie a long way off, up among the mouths of the Scheldt and the Rhine,—the Low Countries of modern history,—an uncomfortable

people then, who would rush into their woods and marshes after a spell of fighting, and who seemed to have no particular homes or cities that could be attacked or destroyed. It was nearly the end of summer just now, and the distance between, let us say, Vannes in Brittany, and Breda, or even Antwerp, seems to us to be considerable, when we remember the condition of the country, and the size of Cæsar's army. But he had a few weeks to fill up, and then he might feel that all Gaul had been "pacified." At present there was this haughty little northern corner. "*Omni Galliâ pacatâ, Morini Menapiique superent;*"—"all Gaul having been pacified, the Morini and Menapii remained." He was, moreover, no doubt beginning to reflect that from the Morini could be made the shortest journey into that wild Ultima Thule of an island in which lived the Britanni. Cæsar takes advantage of the few weeks, and attacks these uncomfortable people. When they retreat into the woods, he cuts the woods down. He does cut down an immense quantity of wood, but the enemy only recede into thicker and bigger woods. Bad weather comes on, and the soldiers can no longer endure life in their skin tents. Let us fancy these Italians encountering winter in undrained Flanders, with no walls or roofs to protect them, and ordered to cut down interminable woods! Had a "Times" been written and filed, instead of a "Commentary" from the hands of the General-in-chief, we should probably have heard of a good deal of suffering. As it is, we are only told that Cæsar had to give up his enterprise for that year. He therefore burnt all their villages, laid waste all their fields, and then took his army down into a more comfortable region south of the Seine, and there put them into winter quarters,—not much to the comfort of the people there residing.



## CHAPTER V.

FOURTH BOOK OF THE WAR IN GAUL.—CÆSAR CROSSES  
THE RHINE, SLAUGHTERS THE GERMANS, AND GOES  
INTO BRITAIN.—B.C. 55.

IN the next year certain Germans, Usipetes and others, crossed the Rhine into Gaul, not far from the sea, as Cæsar tells us. He tells us again, that when he drove the Germans back over the river, it was near the confluence of the Meuse and the Rhine. When we remember how difficult it was for Cæsar to obtain information, we must acknowledge that his geography as to the passage of the Rhine out to the sea, and of the junction of the Rhine and the Meuse by the Waal, is wonderfully correct. The spot indicated as that at which the Germans were driven into the river would seem to be near Bommel in Holland, where the Waal and the Meuse join their waters, at the head of the island of Bommel, where Fort St. André stands, or stood.\*

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\* Cæsar speaks of the confluence of the Rhine and the "Mosa" as the spot at which he drove the Germans into the river,—and in various passages, speaking of the Mosa, clearly means the Meuse. It appears, however, to be the opinion of English scholars who have studied the topography of Cæsar's campaigns with much labor, that the confluence of the Moselle and Rhine, from which Coblentz derives its name, is the spot intended. Napoleon, who has hardly made himself an author-



Those wonderful Suevi, among whom the men alternately fight and plough, year and year about, caring more, however, for cattle than they do for corn, who are socialists in regard to land, having no private property in their fields,—who, all of them, from their youth upwards, do just what they please,—large, bony men, who wear, even in these cold regions, each simply some scanty morsel of skin covering,—who bathe in rivers all the year through, who deal with traders only to sell the spoils of war, who care but little for their horses, and ride, when they do ride, without saddles,—thinking nothing of men to whom such delicate appendages are necessary,—who drink no wine, and will have no neighbors near them,—these ferocious Suevi have driven other German tribes over the Rhine into Gaul. Cæsar, hearing this, is filled with apprehension. He knows the weakness of his poor friends the Gauls,—how prone they are to gossiping, of what a restless temper. It is in the country of the Menapii, the tribe with which he did not quite finish his little affair in the last chapter, that these Germans are settling; and there is no knowing what trouble the intruders may give him if he allows them to make themselves at home on that side of the river. So he hurries off to give help to the poor Menapii.

Of course there is a sending of ambassadors. The Germans acknowledge that they have been turned out of their own lands by their brethren, the Suevi, who are better men than they are. But they profess that,

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ity on the affairs of Cæsar generally, but who is thought to be an authority in regard to topography, holds to the opinion that the site in Holland is intended to be described. Readers who are anxious on the subject can choose between the two; but readers who are not anxious will probably be more numerous.

in fighting, the Suevi, and the Suevi only, are their masters. Not even the immortal gods can stand against the Suevi. But they also are Germans, and are not at all afraid of the Romans. But in the proposition which they make they show some little awe. Will Cæsar allow them to remain where they are, or allot to them some other region on that side of the Rhine? Cæsar tells them that they may go and live, if they please, with the Ubii,—another tribe of Germans who occupy the Rhine country, probably where Cologne now stands, or perhaps a little north of it, and who seem already to have been forced over the Rhine,—they, or some of them,—and to have made good their footing somewhere in the region in which Charlemagne built his church, now called Aix-la-Chapelle. There they are, Germans still, and probably are so because these Ubii made good their footing. The Ubii also are in trouble with the Suevi; and if these intruders will go and join the Ubii, Cæsar will make it all straight for them. The intruders hesitate, but do not go, and at last attack Cæsar's cavalry, not without some success. During this fight there is double treachery,—first on the part of the Germans, and then on Cæsar's part—which is chiefly memorable for the attack made on Cæsar in Rome. It was in consequence of the deceit here practised that it was proposed by his enemies in the city that he should be given up by the Republic to the foe. Had any such decree been passed, it would not have been easy to give up Cæsar.

The Germans are, of course, beaten, and they are driven into the river on those low and then undrained regions in which the Rhine and the Meuse and the Waal confuse themselves and confuse travelers;—either here, or much higher up the river at Coblenz;

but the reader will already have settled that question for himself at the beginning of the chapter. Cæsar speaks of these Germans as though they were all drowned,—men, women, and children. They had brought their entire families with them, and, when the fighting went against them, with their entire families they fled into the river. Cæsar was pursuing them after the battle, and they precipitated themselves over the banks. There, overcome by fear, fatigue, and the waters, they perished. There was computed to be a hundred and eighty thousand of them who were destroyed; but the Roman army was safe to a man.\*

Then Cæsar made up his mind to cross the river. It seems that he had no intention of extending the empire of the Republic into what he called Germany, but that he thought it necessary to frighten the Germans. The cavalry of those intruding Usipetes had, luckily for them, been absent, foraging over the river; and he now sent to the Sigambri, among whom they had taken refuge, desiring that these horsemen should be given up to him. But the Sigambri will not obey. The Germans seem to have understood that Cæsar had Gaul in his hands, to do as he liked with it; but they grudged his interference beyond the Rhine. Cæsar, however, always managed to have a set of friends among his enemies, to help him in adjusting his enmities. We have heard of the Ædui in Central Gaul, and of the Remi in the north. The Ubii were his German friends, who were probably at this time occupying both banks of the river; and the Ubii ask

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\* "Hostium numerus capitum CDXXX millium fuisset," from which words we are led to suppose that there were 180,000 fighting men, besides the women and children.

him just to come over and frighten their neighbors. Cæsar resolves upon gratifying them. And as it is not consistent either with his safety or with his dignity to cross the river in boats, he determines to build a bridge.

Is there a schoolboy in England, or one who has been a schoolboy, at any Cæsar-reading school, who does not remember those memorable words, "*Tigna bina sesquipedalia*," with which Cæsar begins his graphic account of the building of the bridge? When the breadth of the river is considered, its rapidity, and the difficulty which there must have been in finding tools and materials for such a construction, in a country so wild and so remote from Roman civilization, the creation of this bridge fills us with admiration for Cæsar's spirit and capacity. He drove down piles into the bed of the river, two and two, prone against the stream. We could do that now, though hardly as quick as Cæsar did it; but we should want coffer-dams and steam-pumps, patent rammers, and a clerk of the works. He explains to us that he so built the foundations that the very strength of the stream added to their strength and consistency. In ten days the whole thing was done, and the army carried over. Cæsar does not tell us at what suffering, or with the loss of how many men. It is the simplicity of everything which is so wonderful in these Commentaries. We have read of works constructed by modern armies, and of works which modern armies could not construct. We remember the road up from Balaclava, and the railway which was sent out from England. We know too, what are the aids and appliances with which science has furnished us. But yet, in no modern warfare do the difficulties seem to have been so light, so little worthy of mention, as they were to Cæsar. He made

his bridge and took over his army, cavalry and all, in ten days. There must have been difficulty and hardship, and the drowning, we should fear, of many men; but Cæsar says nothing of all this.

Ambassadors immediately are sent. From the moment in which the bridge was begun, the Sigambri ran away and hid themselves in the woods. Cæsar burns all their villages, cuts down all their corn, and travels down into the country of the Ubii. He comforts them; and tidings of his approach then reach those terrible Suevi. They make ready for war on a grand scale; but Cæsar, reflecting that he had not brought his army over the river for the sake of fighting the Suevi, and telling us that he had already done enough for honor and for the good of the cause, took his army back after eighteen days spent in the journey, and destroyed his bridge.

Then comes a passage which makes a Briton vacillate between shame at its own ancient insignificance, and anger at Cæsar's misapprehension of his ancient character. There were left of the fighting season after Cæsar came back across the Rhine just a few weeks; and what can he do better with them than go over and conquer Britannia? This first record of an invasion upon us comes in at the fag-end of a chapter, and the invasion was made simply to fill up the summer! Nobody, Cæsar tells us, seemed to know anything about the island; and yet it was the fact that in all his wars with the Gauls, the Gauls were helped by men out of Britain. Before he will face the danger with his army he sends over a trusty messenger, to look about and find out something as to the coasts and harbors. The trusty messenger does not dare to disembark, but comes back and tells Cæsar what he has seen from his ship.

Cæsar, in the mean time, has got together a great fleet somewhere in the Boulogne and Calais country; and, —so he says,—messengers, have come to him from Britain, whither rumors of his purpose have already flown, saying that they will submit themselves to the Roman Republic. We may believe just as much of that as we please. But he clearly thinks less of the Boulogne and Calais people than he does even of the Britons, which is a comfort to us. When these people, —then called Morini,—came to him, asking pardon for having dared to oppose him once before, and offering any number of hostages, and saying that they had been led on by bad advice, Cæsar admitted them into some degree of grace; not wishing, as he tells us, to be kept out of Britain by the consideration of such very small affairs. “*Neque has tantularum rerum occupationes sibi Britanniae anteponendas judicabat.*” We hope that the Boulogne and Calais people understand and appreciate the phrase. Having taken plenty of hostages, he determines to trust the Boulogne and Calais people, and prepares his ships for passing the Channel. He starts nearly at the third watch,—about midnight, we may presume. A portion of his army,—the cavalry,—encounter some little delay, such as has often occurred on the same spot since, even to travelers without horses. He himself got over to the British coast at about the fourth hour. This, at midsummer, would have been about quarter past eight. As it was now late in the summer, it may have been nine o’clock in the morning when Cæsar found himself under the cliffs of Kent, and saw our armed ancestors standing along all the hills ready to meet him. He stayed at anchor, waiting for his ships, till about two P. M. His cavalry did not get across till four days



afterwards. Having given his orders, and found a fitting moment and a fitting spot, Cæsar runs his ships up upon the beach.

Cæsar confesses to a good deal of difficulty in getting ashore. When we know how very hard it is to accomplish the same feat, on the same coast, in these days, with all the appliances of modern science to aid us, and, as we must presume, with no real intention on the part of the Cantii, or men of Kent, to oppose our landing, we can quite sympathise with Cæsar. The ships were so big that they could not be brought into very shallow water. The Roman soldiers were compelled to jump into the sea, heavily armed, and there to fight with the waves and with the enemy. But the Britons having the use of all their limbs, knowing the ground, standing either on the shore or just running into the shallows, made the landing uneasy enough. "Nostri"—our men,—says Cæsar, with all these things against them, were not all of them so alert at fighting as was usual with them on dry ground;—at which no one can be surprised.

Cæsar had two kinds of ships,—"*naves longæ*," long ships for carrying soldiers; and "*naves onerariæ*," ships for carrying burdens. The long ships do not seem to have been such ships of war as the Romans generally used in their sea-fights, but were handier, and more easily worked, than the transports. These he laid broadside to the shore, and harassed the poor natives with stones and arrows. Then the eagle-bearer of the tenth legion jumped into the sea, proclaiming that he at any rate, would do his duty. Unless they wished to see their eagle fall into the hands of the enemy, they must follow him. "Jump down, he said, my fellow-sol-

diers, unless you wish to betray your eagle to the enemy. I at least will do my duty to the Republic and to our General. When he had said this with a loud voice, he threw himself out of the ship and advanced the eagle against the enemy." Seeing and hearing this, the men leaped forth freely, from that ship and from others. As usual, there was some sharp fighting. *Pugnatum est ab utrisque acriter.*" It is nearly always the same thing. Cæsar throws away none of his glory by underrating his enemy. But at length the Britons fly. "This thing only was wanting to Cæsar's usual good fortune,"—that he was deficient in cavalry wherewith to ride on in pursuit, and "take the island!" Considering how very short a time he remains in the island, we feel that his complaint against fortune is hardly well founded. But there is a general surrender, and a claiming of hostages, and after a few days a sparkle of new hope in the breasts of the Britons. A storm arises and Cæsar's ships are so knocked about that he does not know how he will get back to Gaul. He is troubled by a very high tide, not understanding the nature of these tides. As he had only intended this for a little tentative trip,—a mere taste of a future war with Britain,—he had brought no large supply of corn with him. He must get back, by hook or by crook. The Britons, seeing how it is with him, think that they can destroy him, and make an attempt to do so. The seventh legion is in great peril, having been sent out to find corn, but is rescued. Certain of his ships,—those which had been most grievously handled by the storm,—he breaks up, in order that he may mend the others with their materials. When we think how long it takes us to mend ships having dockyards, and patent slips, and all

things ready, this is most marvelous to us. But he does mend his ships, and while so doing he has a second fight with the Britons, and again repulses them. There is a burning and destroying of everything far and wide, a gathering of ambassadors to Cæsar asking for terms, a demand for hostages,—a double number of hostages now, whom Cæsar desired to have sent over to him to Gaul, because at this time of the year he did not choose to trust them to ships that were unseaworthy; and he himself, with all his army, gets back into the Boulogne and Calais country. Two transports only are missing, which are carried somewhat lower down the coast. There are but three hundred men in these transports, and these the Morini of those parts threaten to kill unless they will give up their arms. But Cæsar sends help, and even these three hundred are saved from disgrace. There is, of course, more burning of houses and laying waste of fields because of this little attempt, and then Cæsar puts his army into winter quarters.

What would have been the difference to the world if the Britons, as they surely might have done, had destroyed Cæsar and every Roman, and not left even a ship to get back to Gaul? In lieu of this Cæsar would send news to Rome of these various victories, and have a public thanksgiving decreed,—on this occasion for twenty days.

## CHAPTER VI.

FIFTH BOOK OF THE WAR IN GAUL.—CÆSAR'S SECOND  
INVASION OF BRITAIN.—THE GAULS RISE  
AGAINST HIM.—B.C. 54.

ON his return out of Britain, Cæsar, as usual, went over the Alps to look after his other provinces, and to attend to his business in Italy; but he was determined to make another raid upon the island. He could not yet assume that he had "taken it," and therefore he left minute instructions with his generals as to the building of more ships, and the repair of those which had been so nearly destroyed. He sends to Spain, he tells us, for the things necessary to equip his ships. We never hear of any difficulty about money. We know that he did obtain large grants from Rome for the support of his legions; but no scruple was made in making war maintain war, as far as such maintenance could be obtained. Cæsar personally was in an extremity of debt when he commenced his campaigns. He had borrowed an enormous sum, eight hundred and thirty talents, or something over £200,000, from Crassus,—who was specially the rich Roman of those days,—before he could take charge of his Spanish province. When his wars were over, he returned to Rome with a great treasure; and indeed during these wars in

Gaul he expended large sums in bribing Romans. We may suppose that he found hoards among the barbarians, as Lord Clive did in the East Indies. Clive contented himself with taking some: Cæsar probably took all.

Having given the order about his ships, he settled a little matter in Illyricum, taking care to raise some tribute there also. He allows but a dozen lines for recording this winter work, and then tells us that he hurried back to his army and his ships. His command had been so well obeyed in regard to vessels, that he finds ready, of that special sort which he had ordered with one bank of oars only on each side, as many as six hundred, and twenty-eight of the larger sort. He gives his soldiers very great credit for their exertions, and sends his fleet to the *Portus Itius*. The exact spot which Cæsar called by this name the geographers have not identified, but it is supposed to be between Boulogne and Calais. It may probably have been at *Wissant*. Having seen that things were thus ready for a second trip into Britain, he turns round and hurries off with four legions and eight hundred cavalry.—an army of 25,000 men,—into the *Treves* country. There is a quarrel going on there between two chieftains which it is well that he should settle,—somewhat as the monkey settled the contest about the oyster. This, however, is a mere nothing of an affair, and he is back again among his ships at the *Portus Itius* in a page and a half.

He resolves upon taking five legions of his own soldiers into Britain, and two thousand mounted Gauls. He had brought together four thousand of these horsemen, collected from all Gaul, thier chiefs and nobles, not only as fighting allies, but as hostages that the tribes should not rise in rebellion while his back was

turned. These he divides, taking half with him, and leaving half with three legions of his own men, under Labienus, in the Boulogne country, as a base to his army, to look after the provisions, and to see that he be not harassed on his return. There is a little affair, however, with one of the Gaulish chieftains, Dumnorix the *Æduan*, who ought to have been his fastest friend. Dumnorix runs away with all the *Æduan* horsemen. Cæsar, however, sends after him and has him killed, and then all things are ready. He starts with altogether more than 800 ships at sunset, and comes over with a gentle south-west wind. He arrives off the coast of Britain at about noon, but can see none of the inhabitants on the cliff. He imagines that they have all fled, frightened by the number of his ships. Cæsar establishes his camp, and proceeds that same night about twelve miles into the country, —eleven miles, we may say, as our mile is longer than the Roman,—and there he finds the Britons. There is some fighting, after which Cæsar returns and fortifies his camp. Then there comes a storm and knocks his ships about terribly,—although he had found, as he thought, a nice soft place for them. But the tempest is very violent, and they are torn away from their anchors, and thrust upon the shore, and dashed against each other till there is infinite trouble. He is obliged to send over to Labienus, telling him to build more ships; and those which are left he drags up over the shore to his camp, in spite of the enormous labor required in doing it. He is ten days at this work, night and day, and we may imagine that his soldiers had not an easy time of it. When this has been done, he advances again into the country after the enemy, and finds that Cassivellaunus is in command of the united



forces of the different tribes. Cassivellaunus comes from the other side of the Thames, over in Middlesex or Hertfordshire. The Britons had not hitherto lived very peaceably together, but now they agree that against the Romans they will act in union under Cassivellaunus.

Cæsar's description of the island is very interesting. The interior is inhabited by natives,—or rather by “aborigines.” Cæsar states this at least as the tradition of the country. But the maritime parts are held by Belgian immigrants, who, for the most part have brought with them from the Continent the names of their tribes. The population is great, and the houses, built very like the houses in Gaul, are numerous and very thick together. The Britons have a great deal of cattle. They use money, having either copper coin or iron rings of a great weight. Tin is found in the middle of the island, and, about the coast, iron. But the quantity of iron found is small. Brass they import. They have the same timber as in Gaul,—only they have neither beech nor fir. Hares and chickens and geese they think it wrong to eat; but they keep these animals as pets. The climate, on the whole, is milder than in Gaul. The island is triangular. One corner, that of Kent, has an eastern and a southern aspect. This southern side of the island he makes 500 miles, exceeding the truth by about 150 miles. Then Cæsar becomes a little hazy in his geography,—telling us that the other side, meaning the western line of the triangle, where Ireland lies, verges towards Spain. Ireland, he says, is half the size of Britain, and about the same distance from it that Britain is from Gaul. In the middle of the channel dividing Ireland from Britain there is an island called Mona,—the Isle of Man. There are also some other islands which at

midwinter have thirty continuous days of night. Here Cæsar becomes not only hazy but mythic. But he explains that he has seen nothing of this himself, although he has ascertained, by scientific measurement, that the nights in Britain are shorter than on the Continent. Of course the nights are shorter with us in summer than they are in Italy, and longer in winter. The western coast he makes out to be 700 miles long; in saying which he is nearly 100 miles over the mark. The third side he describes as looking towards the north. He means the eastern coast. This he calls 800 miles long, and exaggerates our territories by more than 200 miles. The marvel, however, is that he should be so near the truth. The men of Kent are the most civilized: indeed they are almost as good as Gauls in this respect! What changes does not time make in the comparative merits of countries! The men in the interior live on flesh and milk, and do not care for corn. They wear skin clothing. They make themselves horrible with woad, and go about with very long hair. They shave close, except the head and upper lip. Then comes the worst habit of all;—ten or a dozen men have their wives in common between them.

We have a very vivid and by no means unflattering account of the singular agility of our ancestors in their mode of fighting from their chariots. "This," says Cæsar, "is the nature of their chariot-fighting. They first drive rapidly about the battle-field,—*"per omnes partes,"*—and throw their darts, and frequently disorder the ranks by the very terror occasioned by the horses and by the noise of the wheels; and when they have made their way through the bodies of the cavalry, they jump down and fight on foot. Then the charioteers go a little out of the battle, and so place their chariots

that they may have a ready mode of returning should their friends be pressed by the number of their enemies. Thus they unite the rapidity of cavalry and the stability of infantry; and so effective do they become by daily use and practice, that they are accustomed to keep their horses, excited as they are, on their legs on steep and precipitous ground, and to manage and turn them very quickly, and to run along the pole and stand upon the yoke,"—by which the horses were held together at the collars,—“and again with the greatest rapidity to return to the chariot.”\* All which is very wonderful.

Of course there is a great deal of fighting, and the Britons soon learn by experience to avoid general engagements and maintain guerrilla actions. Cæsar by degrees makes his way to the Thames, and with great difficulty gets his army over it. He can only do this at one place and that badly. The site of this ford he does not describe to us. It is supposed to have been near the place which we now know as Sunbury. He does tell us that his men were so deep in the water that their heads only were above the stream. But even thus they were so impetuous in their onslaught, that the Britons would not wait for them on the

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\* All well-instructed modern Britons have learned from the old authorities that the Briton war-chariots were furnished with scythes attached to the axles,—from Pomponius Mela, the Roman geographer, and from Mrs. Markham, among others. And Eugene Sue, in his novel translated into English under the name of the ‘Rival Races,’ explains how the Bretons on the other side of the water, in the Morbihan, used these scythes: and how, before a battle with Cæsar’s legions, the wives of the warriors arranged the straps so that the scythes might be worked from the chariot like oars from a boat. But Cæsar says nothing of such scythes, and surely he would have done so had he seen them. The reader must choose between Cæsar’s silence and the authority of Pomponius Mela, Mrs. Markham, and Eugene Sue.

opposite bank, but ran away. Soon there come unconditional surrender, and hostages, and promises of tribute. Cassivellaunus, who is himself but a usurper, and therefore has many enemies at home, endeavors to make himself secure in a strong place or town, which is supposed to have been on or near the site of our St. Albans. Cæsar, however, explains that the poor Britons give the name of a town,—“oppidum,”—to a spot in which they have merely surrounded some thick woods with a ditch and rampart. Cæsar, of course, drives them out of their woodland fortress, and then there quickly follows another surrender, more hostages, and the demand for tribute. Cæsar leaves his orders behind him, as though to speak were to be obeyed. One Mandubratius, and not Cassivellaunus is to be the future king in Middlesex and Hertfordshire,—that is, over the Trinobantes who live there. He fixes the amount of tribute to be sent annually by the Britons to Rome; and he especially leaves orders that Cassivellaunus shall do no mischief to the young Mandubratius. Then he crosses back into Gaul at two trips,—his ships taking half the army first and coming back for the other half; and he piously observes that though he had lost many ships when they were comparatively empty, hardly one had been destroyed while his soldiers were in them.

So was ended Cæsar's second and last invasion of Britain. That he had reduced Britain as he had reduced Gaul he certainly could not boast;—though Quintus Cicero had written to his brother to say that Britannia was,—“confecta,”—finished. Though he had twice landed his army under the white cliffs, and twice taken it away with comparative security, he had on both occasions been made to feel how terribly strong

an ally to the Britons was that channel which divided them from the Continent. The reader is made to feel that on both occasions the existence of his army and of himself is in the greatest peril. Cæsar's idea in attacking Britain was probably rather that of making the Gauls believe that his power could reach even beyond them,—could extend itself all round them, even into distant islands,—than of absolutely establishing the Roman dominion beyond that distant sea. The Britons had helped the Gauls in their wars with him, and it was necessary that he should punish any who presumed to give such help. Whether the orders which he left behind him were obeyed we do not know; but we may imagine that the tribute exacted was not sent to Rome with great punctuality. In fact, Cæsar invaded the island twice, but did not reduce it.

On his return to Gaul, nearly at the close of the summer, he found himself obliged to distribute his army about the country because of a great scarcity of provisions. There had been a drought, and the crops had failed. Hitherto he had kept his army together during the winter; now he was obliged to divide his legions, placing one with one tribe, and another with another. A legion and a half he stationed under two of his generals, L. Titurius Sabinus, and L. Aurunculeius Cotta, among the Eburones, who live on the banks of the Meuse in the Liege and Namur country,—a very stout people, who are still much averse to the dominion of Rome. In this way he thought he might best get over that difficulty as to the scarcity of provisions; but yet he so well understood the danger of separating his army, that he is careful to tell us that, with the exception of one legion which he had stationed in a very quiet country,—among the Essui, where Alençon now

stands,—they were all within a hundred miles of each other. Nevertheless, in spite of this precaution, there now fell upon Cæsar the greatest calamity which he had ever yet suffered in war.

During all these campaigns, the desire of the Gauls to free themselves from the power and the tyranny of Rome never ceased; nor did their intention to do so ever fade away. Cæsar must have been to them as a venomous blight, or some evil divinity sent to afflict them for causes which they could not understand. There were tribes who truckled to him, but he had no real friends among them. If any Gauls could have loved him, the Ædui should have done so; but that Dumnorix, the Æduan, who ran away with the horsemen of his tribe when he was wanted to help in the invasion of Britain, had, before he was killed, tried to defend himself, asserting vociferously that he was a free man and belonging to a free state. He had failed to understand that, in being admitted to the alliance of Cæsar, he was bound to obey Cæsar. Cæsar speaks of it all with his godlike simplicity, as though he saw nothing ungodlike in the work he was doing. There was no touch of remorse in him, as he ordered men to be slaughtered and villages to be burned. He was able to look at those things as trifles,—as parts of a great whole. He felt no more than does the gentleman who sends the sheep out of his park to be slaughtered at the appointed time. When he seems to be most cruel, it is for the sake of example,—that some politic result may follow,—that Gauls may know, and Italians know also, that they must bow the knee to Cæsar. But the heart of the reader is made to bleed as he sees the unavailing struggles of the tribes. One does not specially love the Ædui; but Dumnorix protesting that



he will not return, that he is a free man, of a free state, and then being killed, is a man to be loved. Among the Carnutes, where Chartres now stands, Cæsar has set up a pet king, one Tasgetius; but when Cæsar is away in Britain, the Carnutes kill Tasgetius. They will have no pet of Cæsar's. And now the stont Eburones, who have two kings of their own over them, Ambiorix and Cativolcus, understanding that Cæsar's difficulty is their opportunity, attack the Roman camp, with its legion and a half of men under Titurius and Cotta.

Ambiorix, the chieftain, is very crafty. He persuades the Roman generals to send ambassadors to him, and to these he tells his story. He himself, Ambiorix, loves Cæsar beyond all things. Has not Cæsar done him great kindnesses? He would not willingly lift a hand against Cæsar, but he cannot control his state. The facts, however, are thus; an enormous body of Germans has crossed the Rhine, and is hurrying on to destroy that Roman camp; and it certainly will be destroyed, so great is the number of the Germans. Thus says Ambiorix; and then suggests whether it would not be well that Titurius and Cotta with their nine or ten thousand men,—a mere handful of men against all these Germans who are already over the Rhine;—would it not be well that the Romans should go and join some of their brethren, either the legion that is among the Nervii to the east, under Quintus Cicero, the brother of the great orator—or that other legion which Labienus has, a little to the south, on the borders of the Remi and Treviri? And in regard to a good turn on his own part, so great is the love and veneration which he, Ambiorix, feels for Cæsar, that he is quite ready to see the Romans safe through the territories of the Eburones. He begs Titurius and Cotta to think

of this, and to allow him to aid them in their escape while escape is possible. The two Roman generals do think of it. Titurius thinks that it will be well to take the advice of Ambiorix. Cotta, and with him many of the tribunes and centurions of the soldiers, think that they should not stir without Cæsar's orders;—think also that there is nothing baser or more foolish in warfare than to act on advice given by an enemy. Titurius, however, is clear for going, and Cotta, after much argument and some invective, gives way. Early on the next morning they all leave their camp, taking with them their baggage, and marching forth as though through a friendly country,—apparently with belief in the profferd friendship of Ambiorix. The Eburones had of course prepared an ambush, and the Roman army is attacked both behind and before, and is thrown into utter confusion.

The legion, or legion and a half, with its two commanders, is altogether destroyed. Titurius goes out from his ranks to meet Ambiorix, and pray for peace. He is told to throw away his arms, and submitting to the disgrace, casts them down. Then, while Ambiorix is making a long speech, the Roman general is surrounded and slaughtered. Cotta is killed fighting; as also are more than half the soldiers. The rest get back into the camp at night, and then, despairing of any safety, overwhelmed with disgrace, conscious that there is no place for hope, they destroy themselves. Only a few have escaped during the fighting to tell the tale in the camp of Labienus.

As a rule the reader's sympathies are with the Gauls; but we cannot help feeling a certain regret that a Roman legion should have thus been wiled on to destruction through the weakness of its general. If

Titurius could have been made to suffer alone we should bear it better. When we are told how the gallant eagle-bearer, Petrosidius, throws his eagle into the rampart, and then dies fighting before the camp, we wish that Ambiorix had been less successful. Of this, however, we feel quite certain, that there will come a day, and that soon, in which Cæsar will exact punishment.

Having done so much, Ambiorix and the Eburones do not desist. Now, if ever, after so great a disgrace, and with legions still scattered, may Cæsar be worsted. Q. Cicero is with his legion among the Nervii, and thither Ambiorix goes. The Nervii are quite ready, and Cicero is attacked in his camp. And here, too, for a long while it goes very badly with the Romans;—so badly that Cicero is hardly able to hold his ramparts against the attacks made upon them by the barbarians. Red-hot balls of clay and hot arrows are thrown into the camp, and there is a fire. The messengers sent to Cæsar for help are slain on the road, and the Romans begin to think that there is hardly a chance for them of escape. Unless Cæsar be with them they are not safe. All their power, their prestige, their certainty of conquest lies in Cæsar. Cicero behaves like a prudent and valiant man; but unless he had at last succeeded in getting a Gaulish slave to take a letter concealed in a dart to Cæsar, the enemy would have destroyed him.

There is a little episode of two Roman centurions, Pulfius and Varenus, who were always quarreling as to which was the better man of the two. Pulfius with much bravado rushes out among the enemy, and Varenus follows him. Pulfius gets into trouble, and Varenus rescues him. Then Varenus is in a difficulty, and Pulfius comes to his assistance. According to all chances of war, both should have been killed; but

both get back safe into the camp;—and nobody knows from that day to this which was the better man. Cæsar, of course, hastens to the assistance of his lieutenant, having sent word of his coming by a letter fastened to another dart, which, however, hardly reaches Cicero in time to comfort him before he sees the fires by which the coming legion wasted the country along their line of march. Then there is more fighting Cæsar conquers and Q. Cicero is rescued from his very disagreeable position. Labienus has also been in difficulty, stationed, as we remember, on the borders of the Treviri. The Treviri were quite as eager to attack him as the Eburones and Nervii to destroy the legions left in their territories. But before the attack is made, the news of Cæsar's victory, traveling with wonderful speed, is heard of in those parts, and the Treviri think it best to leave Labienus alone.

But Cæsar has perceived that, although he has so often boasted that all Gaul was at last at peace, all Gaul is prepared to carry on the war against him. It is during this winter that he seems to realize a conviction that his presence in the country is not popular with the Gauls in general, and that he has still much to do before he can make them understand that they are not free men, belonging to free states. The opposition to him has become so general that he himself determines to remain in Gaul all the winter; and even after telling us of the destruction of Indutiomarus, the chief of the Treviri, by Labienus, he can only boast that—"Cæsar had, after that was done, Gaul a little quieter"—a little more like a subject country bound hand and foot—than it was before. During this year Cæsar's proconsular power over his provinces was extended for a second period of five years.

## CHAPTER VII.

SIXTH BOOK OF THE WAR IN GAUL.—CÆSAR PURSUES  
AMBIORIX.—THE MANNERS OF THE GAULS AND OF  
THE GERMANS ARE CONTRASTED.—B. C. 53.

CÆSAR begins the next campaign before the winter is over, having, as we have seen, been forced to continue the last long after the winter had commenced. The Gauls were learning to unite themselves, and things were becoming very serious with him. One Roman army, with probably ten thousand men, had been absolutely destroyed, with its generals Titurius, Sabinus and Aurunculeius Cotta. Another under Quintus Cicero would have suffered the same fate, but for Cæsar's happy intervention. A third under Labienus had been attacked. All Gaul had been under arms, or thinking of arms, in the autumn; and though Cæsar had been able to report at the end of the campaign that Gaul,—his Gaul, as he intended that it should be,—was a little quieter, nevertheless he understood well that he still had his work to do before he could enter upon possession. He had already been the master of eight legions in Gaul, containing 48,000 foot-soldiers, levied on the Italian side of the Alps. He had added to this a large body of Gaulish cavalry and light infantry, over and above his eight legions. He had now lost an entire legion and a half, besides

the gaps which must have been made in Britain, and by the loss of those who had fallen when attacked under Cicero by the Nervii. But he would show the Gauls that when so treated he could begin again, not only with renewed but with increased force. He would astound them by his display of Roman power, "thinking that, for the future, it would greatly affect the opinion of Gaul that the power of Italy should be seen to be so great that, if any reverse in war were suffered, not only could the injury be cured in a short time, but that the loss could be repaired even by increased forces." He not only levies fresh troops, but borrows a legion which Pompey commands outside the walls of Rome. He tells us that Pompey yields his legion to the "Republic and to Friendship." The Triumvirate was still existing, and Cæsar's great colleague probably felt that he had no alternative. In this way Cæsar not only re-established the legion which had been annihilated, but completes the others, and takes the field with two new legions added to his army. He probably now had as many as eighty thousand men under his command.

He first makes a raid against our old friends the Nervii, who had nearly conquered Cicero before Christmas, and who were already conspiring again with certain German and neighboring Belgian tribes. The reader will perhaps remember that in the second book this tribe was said to have been so utterly destroyed that hardly their name remained. That, no doubt, was Cæsar's belief after the great slaughter. There had been, however, enough of them left nearly to destroy Q. Cicero and his legion. Then Cæsar goes to Paris,—*Lutetia Parisiorum*, of which we now hear for the first time,—and, with the help of his friends



the Ædui and the Remi, makes a peace with the centre tribes of Gaul, the Senones and Carnutes. Then he resolves upon attacking Ambiorix with all his heart and soul. Ambiorix had destroyed his legion and killed his two generals, and against Ambiorix he must put forth all his force. It is said that when Cæsar first heard of that misfortune he swore that he would not cut his hair or shave himself till he was avenged. But he feels that he must first dispose of those who would naturally be the allies of this much-to-be-persecuted enemy. The Menapii, with whom we may remember that he had never quite settled matters in his former war, and who live on the southern banks of the Meuse not far from the sea, have not even yet sent to him messengers to ask for peace. He burns their villages, takes their cattle, makes slaves of the men, and then binds them by hostages to have no friendship with Ambiorix. In the mean time Labienus utterly defeats the great north-eastern tribe, the Treviri, whom he cunningly allures into fighting just before they are joined by certain Germans who are coming to aid them. "*Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat.*" These unfortunate Gauls and Germans fall into every trap that is laid for them. The speech which Cæsar quotes as having been made by Labienus to his troops on this occasion is memorable. "Now," says Labienus, "you have your opportunity. You have got your enemy thoroughly at advantage. That valor which you have so often displayed before the 'Imperator,' Cæsar, display now under my command. Think that Cæsar is present, and that he beholds you." To have written thus of himself Cæsar must have thought of himself as of a god. He tells the story as though

it were quite natural that Labienus and the soldiers should so regard him.

After this battle, in which the Treviri are of course slaughtered, Cæsar makes a second bridge over the Rhine, somewhat above the spot at which he had crossed before. He does this, he says, for two reasons,—first, because the Germans had sent assistance to the Nervii; and secondly, lest his great enemy Ambiorix should find shelter among the Suevi. Then he suggests that the opportunity is a good one for saying something to his readers of the different manners of Gaul and of Germany. Among the Gauls, in their tribes, their villages, and even in their families, there are ever two factions, so that one should always balance the other, and neither become superior. Cæsar so tells us at this particular point of his narrative, because he is anxious to go back and explain how it was that he had taken the part of the Ædui, and had first come into conflict with the Germans, driving Ariovistus back across the Rhine for their sake. In eastern Gaul two tribes had long balanced each other, each, of course, striving for mastery,—the Ædui and the Sequani. The Sequani had called in the aid of the Germans, and the Ædui had been very hardly treated. In their sufferings they had appealed to Rome, having had former relations of close amity with the Republic. Divitiacus, their chief magistrate,—the brother of Dumnorix who was afterwards killed by Cæsar's order for running away with the Æduan cavalry before the second invasion of Britain,—had lived for a while in Rome, and had enjoyed Roman friendships, that of Cicero among others. There was a good deal of doubt in Rome as to what should be done with these Ædui; but at last, as we know, Cæsar

decided on taking their part; and we know also how he drove Ariovistus back into Germany, with the loss of his wives and daughters. Thus it came to pass, Cæsar tells us, that the *Ædui* were accounted first of all the Gauls in regard to friendship with Rome; while the *Remi*, who came to his assistance so readily when the Belgians were in arms against him, were allowed the second place.

Among the Gauls, there are, he says, two classes of men held in honor,—the Druids and the knights; by which we understand that two professions or modes of life, and two only, were open to the nobility,—the priesthood and the army. All the common people, Cæsar says, are serfs, or little better. They do not hesitate, when oppressed by debt or taxation, or the fear of some powerful enemy, to give themselves into slavery, loving the protection so obtained. The Druids have the chief political authority, and can maintain it by the dreadful power of excommunication. The excommunicated wretch is an outlaw, beyond the pale of civil rights. Over the Druids is one great Druid, at whose death the place is filled by election among all the Druids, unless they be one so conspicuously first that no ceremony of election is needed. Their most sacred spot for worship is among the *Carnutes*, in the middle of the country. Their discipline and mysteries came to them from Britain, and when any very knotty point arises they go to Britain to make inquiry. The Druids don't fight, and pay no taxes. The ambition to be a Druid is very great; but then so is the difficulty. Twenty years of tuition is not uncommonly needed; for everything has to be learned by heart. Of their religious secrets nothing may be written. Their great doctrine is the transmigration of souls; so that

men should believe that the soul never dies, and that death, therefore, or that partial death which we see, need not be feared. They are great also in astronomy, geography, natural history,—and general theology, of course.

The knights, or nobles, have no resource but to fight. Cæsar suggests that before the blessing of his advent they were driven to the disagreeable necessity of fighting yearly with each other. Of all people the Gauls, he says, are the most given to superstition; in so much so, that in all dangers and difficulties they have recourse to human sacrifices, in which the Druids are their ministers. They burn their victims to appease their deities, and, by preference, will burn thieves and murderers,—the gods loving best such polluted victims,—but, in default of such, will have recourse to an immolation of innocents. Then Cæsar tells us that among the gods they chiefly worship Mercury, whom they seem to have regarded as the cleverest of the gods; but they also worship Apollo, Mars, Jove, and Minerva, ascribing to them the attributes which are allowed them by other nations. How the worship of the Greek and Roman gods became mingled with the religion of the Druids we are not told, nor does Cæsar express surprise that it should have been so. Cæsar gives the Roman names of these gods, but he does not intend us to understand that they were so called by the Gauls, who had their own names for their deities. The trophies of war they devote to Mars, and in many states keep large stores of such consecrated spoils. It is not often that a Gaul will commit the sacrilege of appropriating to his own use anything thus made sacred; but the punishment of such offence, when it is com-

mitted, is death by torture. There is the greatest veneration from sons to their fathers. Until the son can bear arms he does not approach his father, or even stand in public in his presence. The husband's fortune is made to equal the wife's dowry, and then the property is common between them. This seems well enough, and the law would suit the views of British wives of the present day. But the next Gaulish custom is not so well worthy of example. Husbands have the power of life and death over their wives and children; and when any man of mark dies, if there be cause for suspicion, his wives are examined under torture, and if any evil practice be confessed, they are there tortured to death. We learn from this passage that polygamy was allowed among the Gauls. The Gauls have grand funerals. Things which have been dear to the departed are burned at these ceremonies. Animals were thus burned in Cæsar's time, but in former days slaves also, and dependents who had been specially loved. The best-governed states are very particular in not allowing rumors as to state affairs to be made matter of public discussion. Anything heard is to be told to the magistrate; but there is to be no discussion on public affairs except in the public council. So much we hear of the customs of the Gauls.

The Germans differ from the Gauls in many things. They know nothing of Druids, nor do they care for sacrifices. They worship only what they see and enjoy,—the sun, and fire, and the moon. They spend their time in hunting and war, and care little for agriculture. They live on milk, cheese, and flesh. They are communists as to the soil, and stay no longer than a year on the same land. These customs they follow lest they should learn to prefer agriculture

to war; lest they should grow fond of broad possessions, so that the rich should oppress the poor; lest they should by too much comfort become afraid of cold and heat; lest the love of money should grow among them, and one man should seek to be higher than another. From all of which it seems that the Germans were not without advanced ideas in political economy.

It is a great point with the Germans to have no near neighbors. For the sake of safety and independence, each tribe loves to have a wide margin. In war the chieftains have power of life and death. In time of peace there are no appointed magistrates, but the chiefs in the cantons declare justice and quell litigation as well as they can. Thieving in a neighboring state,—not in his own,—is honorable to a German. Expeditions for thieving are formed, which men may join or not as they please; but woe betide him who, having promised, fails. They are good to traveling strangers. There was a time when the Gauls were better men than the Germans, and could come into Germany and take German land. Even now, says Cæsar, there are Gaulish tribes living in Germany after German fashion. But the nearness of the Province to Gaul has taught the Gauls luxury, and so it has come to pass that the Gauls are not as good in battle as they used to be. It is interesting to gather from all these notices the progress of civilization through the peoples of Europe, and some hint as to what has been thought to be good and bad for humanity by various races before the time of Christ.

Cæsar then tells us of a great Hercynian forest, beginning from the north of Switzerland and stretch-



ing away to the Danube. A man in nine days would traverse its breadth; but even in sixty days a man could not get to the end of it lengthwise. We may presume that the Black Forest was a portion of it. It contains many singular beasts,—bisons with one horn; elks, which are like great stags, but which have no joints in their legs, and cannot lie down,—nor, if knocked down, can they get up,—which sleep leaning against trees; but the trees sometimes break, and then the elk falls and has a bad time of it. Then there is the urus, almost as big as an elephant, which spares neither man nor beast. It is a great thing to kill a urus, but no one can tame them, even when young. The Germans are fond of mounting the horns of this animal with silver, and using them for drinking-cups.

Cæsar does very little over among the Germans. He comes back, partly destroys his bridge, and starts again in search of Ambiorix. His lieutenant Basilus nearly takes the poor hunted chieftain, but Ambiorix escapes, and Cæsar moralizes about fortune. Ambiorix, the reader will remember, was joint king over the Eburones with one Cativolcus. Cativolcus, who is old, finding how his people are harassed, curses his brother king who has brought these sorrows on the nation, and poisons himself with the juice of yew-tree.

All the tribes in the Belgic country, Gauls as well as Germans, were now very much harassed. They all had helped, or might have helped, or, if left to themselves, might at some future time give help to Ambiorix and the Eburones. Cæsar divides his army, but still goes himself in quest of his victim into the damp uncomfortable countries near the mouths of the Scheldt and Meuse. Here he is much distracted between his burning desire to extirpate

that race of wicked men over whom Ambiorix had been king, and his anxiety lest he should lose more of his own men in the work than the wicked race is worth. He invites the neighboring Gauls to help him in the work, so that Gauls should perish in those inhospitable regions rather than his own legions. This, however, is fixed in his mind, that a tribe which has been guilty of so terrible an offence,—which has destroyed in war an army of his, just as he would have delighted to destroy a Gaulish army,—must be extirpated, so that its very name may cease to exist! “*Pro tali facinore, stirps ac nomen civitatis tollatur.*”

Cæsar, in dividing his army, had stationed Q. Cicero with one legion and the heavy baggage and spoils of the army, in a fortress exactly at that spot from which Titurius Sabinus had been lured by the craft of Ambiorix. Certain Germans, the Sigambri, having learned that all the property of the Eburones had been given up by Cæsar as a prey to any who would take it, had crossed the Rhine that they might thus fill their hands. But it is suggested to them that they may fill their hands much fuller by attacking Q. Cicero in his camp; and they do attack him, when the best part of his army is away looking for provisions. That special spot in the territory of the Eburones is again nearly fatal to a Roman legion. But the Germans, not knowing how to press the advantage they gain, return with their spoil across the Rhine, and Cæsar again comes up like a god. But he has not yet destroyed Ambiorix,—who indeed is not taken at last,—and expresses his great disgust and amazement that the coming of these Germans, which was planned with the view of injuring Ambiorix,

should have done instead so great a service to that monstrously wicked chieftain.

He does his very best to catch Ambiorix in person, offering great rewards and inducing his men to undergo all manner of hardships in the pursuit. Ambiorix, however, with three or four chosen followers, escapes him. But Cæsar is not without revenge. He burns all the villages of the Eburones, and all their houses. He so lays waste the country that even when his army is gone not a soul should be able to live there. After that he probably allowed himself to be shaved. Ambiorix is seen here and is seen there, but with hair-breadth chances eludes his pursuer. Cæsar, having thus failed, returns south, as winter approaches, to Rheims,—Durocortorum; and just telling us in four words how he had one Acco tortured to death because Acco had headed a conspiracy in the middle of Gaul among the Carnutes and Senones, and how he outlawed and banished others whom he could not catch, he puts his legions into winter quarters, and again goes back to Italy to hold assizes and look after his interests amid the great affairs of the Republic

## CHAPTER VIII.

### SEVENTH BOOK OF THE WAR IN GAUL.—THE REVOLT OF VERCINGETORIX—B. C. 52.

IN opening his account of his seventh campaign Cæsar makes almost the only reference to the affairs of Rome which we find in these memoirs. Clodius has been murdered. We know too, that Crassus had been killed at the head of his army in the east, and that, at the death of Clodius, Pompey had been created Dictator in the city with the name of sole Consul. Cæsar, however, only mentions the murder of Clodius, and then goes on to say that the Gauls, knowing how important to him must be the affairs of Rome at this moment, think that he cannot now attend to them, and that, in his absence, they may shake off the Roman yoke. The affairs of Rome must indeed have been important to Cæsar, if, as no doubt is true, he had already before his eyes a settled course of action by which to make himself supreme in the Republic. Clodius, the demagogue, was dead, whom he never could have loved, but whom it had not suited him to treat as an enemy. Crassus, too, was dead, whom, on account of his wealth, Cæsar had admitted as a colleague. Pompey, the third triumvir, remained at Rome, and was now sole Consul; Pompey who, only twelve months since, had so fondly

given up his legion for the sake of the Republic,—and for friendship. Cæsar, no doubt, foresaw by this time that the struggle must be at last between himself and Pompey. The very forms of the old republican rule were being turned adrift, and Cæsar must have known, as Pompey also knew, and Clodius had known, and even Crassus, that a new power would become paramount in the city. But the hands to rest such power must be very strong. — And the day had not yet quite come. Having spent six summers in subduing Gaul, Cæsar would not lose the prestige, the power, the support, which such a territory, really subdued, would give him. Things, doubtless, were important at Rome, but it was still his most politic course to return over the Alps and complete his work. Before the winter was over he heard that the tribes were conspiring, because it was thought that at such an emergency Cæsar could not leave Italy.

This last book of the Commentary, as written by Cæsar, tells the story of the gallant Vercingetorix, one of the Arverni,—the modern Auvergne,—whose father, Celtillus, is said to have sought the chieftainship of all Gaul, and to have been killed on that account by his own state. Vercingetorix is certainly the hero of these wars on the Gaulish side, though we hear nothing of him till this seventh campaign. The conspiracy against Rome is afloat, the Carnutes, whose chief town is Genabum,—Orleans,—having commenced it. Vercingetorix excites his own countrymen to join, but is expelled from their town, Gergovia, for the attempt. The Arverni, or at least their chief men, fear to oppose the Romans; but Vercingetorix obtains a crowd of followers out in the country, and perseveres. Men of other tribes come to him, from as far north as Paris, and west from the

Ocean. He assumes supreme power, and enacts and carries out most severe laws for his guidance during the war. For any greater offence he burns the offender alive and subjects him to all kinds of torments. For any small fault he cuts off a man's ears, pokes out one of his eyes, and sends him home, that he may be an example visible to all men. By threats of such punishment to those who do not join him, and by inflicting such on those who do and are then untrue to him or lukewarm, he gets together a great army. Cæsar, who is still in Italy, hears of all this, and having made things comfortable with Pompey, hurries into the province. \*He tells us of his great difficulty in joining his army,—of the necessity which is incumbent on him of securing even the Roman Province from invasion, and of the manner in which he breaks through snow-clad mountains, the Cevennes, at a time of the year in which such mountains were supposed to be impassable. He is forced into fighting before the winter is over, because, unless he does so, the few friends he has in Gaul, —the Ædui, for instance,—will have been gained over by the enemy. This made it very difficult, Cæsar tells us, for him to know what to do; but he decides that he must begin his campaign, though it be winter still.

Cæsar, moving his army about with wonderful quickness, takes three towns in the centre of Gaul, of which Genabum, Orleans, is the first, and thus provides himself with food. Vercingetorix, when he hears of these losses, greatly troubled in his mind that Cæsar should thus be enabled to exist on the provisions gathered by the Gauls, determines to burn all the Gaulish towns in those parts. He tells his people that there is nothing else for them in their present emergency, and that they must remember when they see their hearths smoking



and their property destroyed, that it would be, or ought to be, much more grievous for them to know that their wives and children would become slaves, as undoubtedly would be their fate, if Cæsar were allowed to prevail. The order is given. Twenty cities belonging to one tribe are burned to the ground. The same thing is done in other States. But there is one very beautiful city, the glory of the country round, which can, they say, be so easily defended that it will be a comfort rather than a peril to them. Avaricum, the present Bourges,—must that also be burned? May not Avaricum be spared? Vercingetorix is all for burning Avaricum as he has burned the others; but he allows himself to be persuaded, and the city is spared—for the time.

Cæsar, of course, determines to take Avaricum; but he encounters great difficulties. The cattle have been driven away. There is no corn. Those wretched *Ædui* do almost nothing for him; and the *Boii*, who are their neighbors, and who, at the best, are but a poor scanty people, are equally unserviceable. Some days his army is absolutely without food; but yet no word of complaint is heard “unworthy of the majesty and former victories of the Roman people.” The soldiers even beg him to continue the siege when he offers to raise it because of the hardships they are enduring. Let them endure anything, they say, but failure! “Moreover Cæsar, when he would accost his legions one by one at their work, and would tell them that he would raise the siege if they could but ill bear their privations, was implored by all of them not to do that. They said that for many years under his command they had so well done their duty that they had undergone no disgrace, had never quitted their ground leaving aught

unfinished,”—except the subjugation of Britain they might perhaps have said,—“that they would be now disgraced if they should raise a siege which had been commenced; that they would rather bear all hardships than not avenge the Roman citizens who had perished at Genabum by the perfidy of the Gauls.” Cæsar puts these words into the mouths of his legionaries, and as we read them we believe that such was the existing spirit of the men. Cæsar’s soldiers now had learned better than to cry because they were afraid of their enemies.

Then we hear that Vercingetorix is in trouble with the Gauls. The Gauls, when they see the Romans so near them, think that they are to be betrayed into Cæsar’s hands, and they accuse their leader. But Vercingetorix makes them a speech, and brings up certain Roman prisoners to give evidence as to the evil condition of the Roman army. Vercingetorix swears that these prisoners are soldiers from the Roman legions, and so settles that little trouble; but Cæsar, defending his legionaries, asserts that the men so used were simply slaves.

Vercingetorix is in his camp at some little distance from Avaricum, while Cæsar is determined to take the city. We have the description of the siege, concise, graphic, and clear. We are told of the nature of the walls; how the Gauls were good at mining and countermining; how they flung hot pitch and boiling grease on the invaders; how this was kept up, one Gaul after another stepping on to the body of his dying comrade; how at last they resolved to quit the town and make their way by night to the camp of Vercingetorix, but were stopped by the prayers of their own women, who feared Cæsar’s mercies;—and how at

last the city was taken. We cannot but execrate Cæsar when he tells us coolly of the result. They were all killed. The old, the women, and the children, perished together, slaughtered by the Romans. Out of forty thousand inhabitants, Cæsar says that about eight hundred got safely to Vercingetorix. Of course we doubt the accuracy of Cæsar's figures when he tells us of the numbers of the Gauls; but we do not doubt that but a few escaped, and that all but a few were slaughtered. When, during the last campaign, the Gauls at Genabum (Orleans) had determined on revolt against Cæsar, certain Roman traders—usurers for the most part, who had there established themselves—were killed. Cæsar gives this as the cause, and sufficient cause, for the wholesale slaughter of women and children! One reflects that not otherwise, perhaps, could he have conquered Gaul, and that Gaul had to be conquered; but we cannot for the moment but abhor the man capable of such work. Vercingetorix bears his loss bravely. He reminds the Gauls that had they taken his advice the city would have been destroyed by themselves and not defended; he tells them that all the states of Gaul are now ready to join him; and he prepares to fortify a camp after the Roman fashion. Hitherto the Gauls have fought either from behind the walls of towns, or out in the open country without other protection than that of the woods and hills.

Then there is another episode with those unsatisfactory Ædui. There is a quarrel among them who shall be their chief magistrate,—a certain old man or a certain young man,—and they send to Cæsar to settle the question. Cæsar's hands are very full; but, as he explains, it is essential to him that his allies shall be

kept in due subordinate order. He therefore absolutely goes in person to one of their cities, and decides that the young man shall be the chief magistrate. But, as he seldom does anything for nothing, he begs that ten thousand *Æduan* infantry and all the *Æduan* cavalry may be sent to help him against *Vercingetorix*. The *Ædui* have no alternative but to comply. Their compliance, however, is not altogether of a friendly nature. The old man who has been put out of the magistracy gets hold of the *Æduan* general of the forces; and the *Æduan* army takes the field,—to help, not *Cæsar*, but *Vercingetorix*! There is a large amount of lying and teachery among the *Ædui*, and of course tidings of what is going on are carried to *Cæsar*. Over and over again these people deceive him, betray him, and endeavor to injure his cause; but he always forgives them, or pretends to forgive them. It is his policy to show to the Gauls how great can be the friendship and clemency of *Cæsar*. If he would have burned the *Ædui* and spared *Bourges* we should have liked him better; but then, had he done so, he would not have been *Cæsar*.

While *Cæsar* is thus troubled with his allies, he has trouble enough also with his enemies. *Vercingetorix*, with his followers, after that terrible reverse at *Avaricum*,—*Bourges*,—goes into his own country which we know as *Auvergne*, and there encamps his army on a high hill with a flat top, called *Gergovia*. All of us who have visited *Clermont* have probably seen the hill. *Vercingetorix* makes three camps for his army on the hill, and the *Arverni* have a town there. The Gaul has so placed himself that there shall be a river not capable of being forded between himself and *Cæsar*. But the Roman general makes a bridge and sets him-

self down with his legions before Gergovia. The limits of this little work do not admit of any detailed description of Cæsar's battles; but perhaps there is none more interesting than this siege. The three Gaulish camps are taken. The women of Gergovia, thinking that their town is taken also, leaning over the walls, implore mercy from the Romans, and beg that they may not be treated as have the women of Avaricum. Certain leading Roman soldiers absolutely climb up into the town. The reader also thinks that Cæsar is to prevail as he always does prevail. But he is beaten back, and has to give it up. On this occasion the gallant Vercingetorix is the master of the day, and Cæsar, excuses himself by explaining how it was that his legions were defeated through the rash courage of his own men, and not by bad generalship of his own. And it probably was so. The reader always feels inclined to believe the Commentary, even when he may most dislike Cæsar. Cæsar again makes his bridge over the river, the Allier, and retires into the territory of his doubtful friends the Ædui. He tells us himself that in that affair he lost 700 men and 46 officers.

It seems that at this time Cæsar with his whole army must have been in great danger of being destroyed by the Gauls. Why Vercingetorix did not follow up his victory and prevent Cæsar from escaping over the Allier is not explained. No doubt the requirements of warfar were not known to the Gaul as they were to the Roman. As it was, Cæsar had enough to do to save his army. The Ædui, of course, turned against him again. All his stores and treasure and baggage were at Noviodunum,—Nevers,—a town belonging to the Ædui. These are seized by his allies, who destroy all that they cannot carry away, and Cæsar's army is in

danger of being starved. Everything has been eaten up where he is, and the Loire, without bridges or fords, was between him and a country where food was to be found. He does cross the river, the Ædui having supposed that it would be impossible. He finds a spot in which his men can wade across with their shoulders just above the waters. And as the spot is for fording, in his great difficulty he makes the attempt and accomplishes it.

Then there is an account of a battle which Labienus is obliged to fight up near Paris. He has four legions away with him there, and having heard of Cæsar's misfortune at Gergovia, knows how imperative it is that he should join his chief. He fights his battle and wins it, and Cæsar tells the story quite as enthusiastically as though he himself had been the conqueror. When this difficulty is overcome, Labienus comes south and joins his Imperator.

The Gauls are still determined to drive Cæsar out of their country, and with this object call together a great council at Bibracte, which was the chief town of the Ædui. It was afterwards called Augustodunum, which has passed into the modern name Autun. At this meeting, the Ædui, who, having been for some years past bolstered up by Rome, think themselves the first of all the Gauls, demand that the chief authority in the revolt against Rome,—now that they have revolted,—shall be intrusted to them. An Æduan chief, they think, should be the commander-in-chief in this war against Rome. Who has done so much for the revolt as the Ædui, who have thrown over their friends the Romans,—now for about the tenth time? But Vercingetorix is unanimously elected, and the Æduan chiefs are disgusted. Then there is an-



other battle. Vercingetorix thinks that he is strong enough to attack the enemy as Cæsar is going down south towards the Province. Cæsar, so says Vercingetorix, is in fact retreating. And, indeed, it seems that Cæsar was retreating. But the Gauls are beaten and fly, losing some three thousand of their men who are slaughtered in the fight. Vercingetorix shuts himself up in a town called Alesia, and Cæsar prepares for another siege.

The taking of Alesia is the last event told in Cæsar's Commentary on the Gallic War, and of all the stories told, it is perhaps the most heartrending. Civilization was never forwarded in a fashion more terrible than that which prevailed at this siege. Vercingetorix with his whole army is forced into the town, and Cæsar surrounds it with ditches, works, lines, and ramparts, so that no one shall be able to escape from it. Before this is completed, and while there is yet a way open of leaving the town, the Gaulish chief sends out horsemen, who are to go to all the tribes of Gaul, and convene the fighting men to that place, so that by their numbers they may raise the siege and expel the Romans. We find that these horsemen do as they are bidden, and that a great Gaulish conference is held, at which it is decided how many men shall be sent by each tribe. Vercingetorix has been very touching in his demand that all this shall be done quickly. He has food for the town for thirty days. Probably it may be stretched to last a little longer. Then, if the tribes are not true to him, he and the eighty thousand souls he has with him must perish. The horsemen make good their escape from the town, and Vercingetorix, with his eighty thousand hungry souls around him, prepares to wait. It seems to us, when we think what must have been

the Gallia of those days, and when we remember how far thirty days would now be for sufficing for such a purpose, that the difficulties to be overcome were insuperable. But Cæsar says that the tribes did send their men, each tribe sending the number demanded, except the Bellovaci,—the men of Beauvais,—who declared that they chose to wage war on their own account; but even they, out of kindness, lent two thousand men. Cæsar explains that even his own best friends among the Gauls,—among whom was one Commius, who had been very useful to him in Britain, and whom he had made king over his own tribe, the Atrebatæ,—at this conjuncture of affairs felt themselves bound to join the national movement. This Commius had even begged for the two thousand men of Beauvais. So great, says Cæsar, was the united desire of Gaul to recover Gallic liberty, that they were deterred from coming by no memory of benefits or of friendship. Eight thousand horsemen and two hundred and forty thousand footmen assembled themselves in the territories of the Ædui. Alesia was north of the Ædui, amidst the Lingones. This enormous army chose its generals, and marched off to Alesia to relieve Vercingetorix.

But the thirty days were passed, and more than past, and the men and women in Alesia were starving. No tidings ever had reached Alesia of the progress which was being made in the gathering of their friends. It had come to be very bad with them there. Some were talking of unconditional surrender. Others proposed to cut their way through the Roman lines. Then one Critognatus had a suggestion to make, and Cæsar gives us the words of his speech. It has been common with the Greek and Latin historians to put

speeches into the mouths of certain orators, adding the words when the matter has come within either their knowledge or belief. Cæsar does not often thus risk his credibility; but on this occasion he does so. We have the speech of Critognatus, word for word. Of those who speak of surrender he thinks so meanly that he will not notice them. As to that cutting a way through the Roman lines, which means death, he is of opinion that to endure misfortune is greater than to die. Many a man can die who cannot bravely live and suffer. Let them endure a little longer. Why doubt the truth and constancy of the tribes? Then he makes his suggestion. Let those who can fight, and are thus useful,—eat those who are useless and cannot fight; and thus live till the levies of all Gaul shall have come to their succor! Those who have authority in Alesia cannot quite bring themselves to this, but they do that which is horrible in the next degree. They will turn out of the town all the old, all the weak, and all the women. After that,—if that will not suffice,—then they will begin to eat each other. The town belongs, or did belong, to a people called the Mandubii,—not to Vercingetorix or his tribe; and the Mandubii, with their children and women, are compelled to go out.

But whither shall they go? Cæsar has told us that there was a margin of ground between his lines and the city wall,—an enclosed space from which there was no egress except into Cæsar's camp or into the besieged town. Here stands these weak ones,—aged men, women, and children,—and implore Cæsar to receive them into his camp, so that they may pass out into the open country. There they stood as suppliants, on that narrow margin of ground between two

armies. Their own friends, having no food for them, had expelled them from their own homes. Would Cæsar have mercy? Cæsar, with a wave of his hand, declines to have mercy. He tells us what he himself decides to do in eight words. "At Cæsar, depositis in vallo custodiis, recipi prohibebat." "But Cæsar, having placed guards along the rampart, forbade that they should be received." We hear no more of them, but we know that they perished!

The collected forces of Gaul do at last come up to attempt the rescue of Vercingetorix,—and indeed they come in time; were they able by coming to do anything? They attack Cæsar in his camp, and a great battle is fought beneath the eyes of the men in Alesia. But Cæsar is very careful that those who now are hemmed up in the town shall not join themselves to the Gauls who have spread over the country all around him. We hear how during the battle Cæsar comes up himself, and is known by the color of his cloak. We again feel, as we read his account of the fighting, that the Gauls nearly win, and that they ought to win. But at last they are driven headlong in flight,—all the levies of all the tribes. The Romans kill very many, were not the labor of killing too much for them, they might kill all. A huge crowd, however, escapes, and the men scatter themselves back into their tribes.

On the next day Vercingetorix yields himself and the city to Cæsar. During the late battle he and his men shut up within the walls have been simply spectators of the fighting. Cæsar is sitting in his lines before his camp; and there the chieftains, with Vercingetorix at their head, are brought up to him. Plutarch tells us a story of the chieftain riding up before Cæsar to deliver himself, with gilt armor, on a grand

horse, caracolling and prancing. We cannot fancy that any horse out of Alesia, could, after the siege, have been fit for such holiday occasion. The horses out of Vercingetorix's stables had probably been eaten many days since. Then Cæsar again forgives the Ædui; but Vercingetorix is taken as a prisoner to Rome, is kept a prisoner for six years, is then led in Cæsar's Triumph, and, after these six years, is destroyed, as a victim needed for Cæsar's glory,—that so honor may be done to Cæsar! Cæsar puts his army into winter quarters, and determines to remain himself in Gaul during the winter. When his account of these things reaches Rome, a "supplication" of twenty days is decreed in his honor.

This is the end of Cæsar's Commentary "*De Bello Gallico*." The war was carried on for two years more; and a memoir of Cæsar's doings during those two years, —B.C. 51 and 50,—was written, after Cæsar's manner, by one Aulus Hirtius. There is no pretence on the writer's part that this was the work of Cæsar's hands, as in a short preface he makes an author's apology for venturing to continue what Cæsar had begun. The most memorable circumstance of Cæsar's warfares told in this record of two campaigns is the taking of Uxellodunum, a town in the south-west of France, the site of which is not now known. Cæsar took the town by cutting off the water, and then horribly mutilated the inhabitants who had dared to defend their own hearths. "Cæsar," says this historian, "knowing well that his clemency was acknowledged by all men, and that he need not fear that any punishment inflicted by him would be attributed to the cruelty of his nature, perceiving also that he could never know what might be

the end of his policy if such rebellions should continue to break out, thought that other Gauls should be deterred by the fear of punishment." So he cut off the hands of all those who had borne arms at Uxellodunum, and turned the maimed wretches adrift upon the world! And his apologist adds, that he gave them life so that the punishment of these wicked ones,—who had fought for their liberty,—might be the more manifest to the world at large! This was perhaps the crowning act of Cæsar's cruelty,—defended, as we see, by the character he had achieved for clemency!

Soon after this Gaul was really subdued, and then we hear the first preparatory notes of the coming civil war. An attempt was made at Rome to ruin Cæsar in his absence. One of the consuls of the year.—B. c. 51,—endeavored to deprive him of the remainder of the term of his proconsulship, and to debar him from seeking the suffrages of the people for the consulship in his absence. Two of his legions are also demanded from him, and are surrendered by him. The order, indeed, is for one legion from him and one from Pompeius; but he has had with him, as the reader will remember, a legion borrowed from Pompeius;—and thus in fact Cæsar is called upon to give up two legions. And he gives them up,—not being as yet quite ready to pass the Rubicon.



## CHAPTER IX.

FIRST BOOK OF THE CIVIL WAR.—CÆSAR CROSSES THE  
RUBICON.—FOLLOWS POMPEY TO BRUNDISIUM.—  
AND CONQUERS AFRANIUS IN SPAIN.—B. C. 49.

CÆSAR now gives us his history of that civil war in which he and Pompey contended for the mastery over Rome and the Republic. In his first Commentary he had recorded his campaigns in Gaul,—campaigns in which he reduced tribes which were, if not hostile, at any rate foreign, and by his success in which he carried on and maintained the potency, traditions and purport of the Roman Republic. It was the ambition of the Roman to be master of the known world. In his ideas no more of the world was really known than had become Roman, and any extension to the limits of this world could only be made by the addition of so-called barbarous tribes to the number of Roman subjects. In reducing Gaul, therefore, and in fighting with the Germans, and going over to Britain, Cæsar was doing that which all good Romans wished to see done, and was rivaling in the West the great deeds which Pompey had accomplished for the Republic in the East. In this second Commentary he is forced to deal with a subject which must have been less gratifying to Roman readers. He relates to us the victories which he won with Roman

legions over other legions equally Roman, and by which he succeeded in destroying the liberty of the Republic.

It must be acknowledged on Cæsar's behalf that in truth liberty had fallen in Rome before Cæsar's time. Power had produced wealth, and wealth had produced corruption. The tribes of Rome were bought and sold at the various elections, and a few great oligarchs, either of this faction or of that, divided among themselves the places of trust and honor and power, and did so with hands ever open for the grasping of public wealth. An honest man with clean hands and a conscience, with scruples and a love of country, became unfitted for public employment. Cato in these days was simply ridiculous; and even Cicero, though he was a trimmer, was too honest for the times. Laws were wrested from their purposes, and the very Tribunes\* of the people had become the worst of tyrants. It was necessary, perhaps, that there should be a master;—so at least Cæsar thought. He had, no doubt, seen this necessity during all these years of fighting in Gaul, and had resolved that he would not be less than First in the new order of things. So he crossed the Rubicon.

The reader of this second Commentary will find it less alluring than the first. There is less in it of adventure, less of new strange life, and less of that sound, healthy, joyous feeling which sprang from a thorough conviction on Cæsar's part that in crushing the Gauls

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\* The Tribunes of the people were officers elected annually to act on behalf of the people as checks on the magistracy of the Republic, and were endowed with vast powers, which they were presumed to use for the protection of liberty. But the office of Tribune had become degraded to party purposes, as had every other office of the state.

he was doing a thoroughly good thing. To us, and our way of thinking, his doings in Gaul were stained with terrible cruelty. To him and to his Romans they were foul with no such stain. How other Roman conquerors acted to other conquered peoples we may learn from the fact, that Cæsar obtained a character for great mercy by his forbearance in Gaul. He always writes as though he were free from any sting of conscience, as he tells us of the punishments which policy called upon him to inflict. But as he writes of these civil wars, there is an absence of this feeling of perfect self-satisfaction, and at the same time he is much less cruel. Hecatombs of Gauls, whether men or women or children, he could see burned or drowned or starved, mutilated or tortured, without a shudder. He could give the command for such operations with less remorse than we feel when we order the destruction of a litter of undesirable puppies. But he could not bring himself to slay Roman legionaries, even in fair fighting, with anything like self-satisfaction. In this he was either soft-hearted or had a more thorough feeling of country than generals or soldiers who have fought in civil contests since his time have shown. In the Wars of the Roses and in those of Cromwell we recognize no such feeling. The American generals were not so restrained. But Cæsar seems to have valued a Roman legionary more than a tribe of Gauls.

Nevertheless he crossed the Rubicon. We have all heard of his crossing of the Rubicon, but Cæsar says nothing about it. The Rubicon was a little river now almost if not altogether unknown, running into the Adriatic between Ravenna and Ariminum,—Rimini,—and dividing the provinces of so-called Cisalpine Gaul from the territory under the immediate

rule of the magistracy of Rome. Cæsar was, so to say, at home north of the Rubicon. He was in his own province, and had all things under his command. But he was forbidden by the laws even to enter the territory of Rome proper while in the command of a Roman province; and therefore, in crossing the Rubicon, he disobeyed the laws, and put himself in opposition to the constituted authorities of the city. It does not appear, however, that very much was thought of this, or that the passage of the river was in truth taken as the special sign of Cæsar's purpose, or as a deed that was irrevocable in its consequences. There are various pretty stories of Cæsar's hesitation as he stood on the brink of the river, doubting whether he would plunge the world into civil war. We are told how a spirit appeared to him and led him across the water with martial music, and how Cæsar, declaring that the die was cast, went on and crossed the fatal stream. But all this was fable, invented on Cæsar's behalf by Romans who came after Cæsar. Cæsar's purpose was, no doubt, well understood when he brought one of his legions down into that corner of his province, but offers to treat with him on friendly terms were made by Pompey and his party after he had established himself on the Roman side of the river.

When the civil war began, Cæsar had still, according to the assignment made to him, two years and a half left of his allotted period of government in the three provinces; but his victories and his power had been watched with anxious eyes from Rome, and the Senate had attempted to decree that he should be recalled. Pompey was no longer Cæsar's friend, nor did Cæsar expect his friendship. Pompey, who had lately played his cards but badly, and must have felt

that he had played them badly, had been freed from his bondage to Cæsar by the death of Crassus, the third triumvir, by the death of Julia, Cæsar's daughter, and by the course of things in Rome. It had been an unnatural alliance arranged by Cæsar with the view of clipping his rival's wings. The fortunes of Pompey had hitherto been so bright, that he also had seemed to be divine. While still a boy, he had commanded and conquered, women had adored him, the soldiers had worshipped him. Sulla had called him the Great; and, as we are told, had raised his hat to him in token of honor. He had been allowed the glory of a Triumph while yet a youth, and had triumphed a second time before he had reached middle life. He had triumphed again a third time, and the three Triumphs had been won in the three quarters of the globe. In all things he had been successful, and in all things happy. He had driven the swarming pirates from every harbor in the Mediterranean, and had filled Rome with corn. He had returned a conqueror with his legions from the East, and had dared to disband them, that he might live again as a private citizen. And after that, when it was thought necessary that the city should be saved, in her need, from the factions of her own citizens, he had been made sole consul. It is easier now to understand the character of Pompey than the position which, by his unvaried successes, he had made for himself in the minds both of the nobles and of the people. Even up to this time, even after Cæsar's wars in Gaul, there was something of divinity hanging about Pompey, in which the Romans of the city trusted. He had been imperious, but calm in manner and self-possessed—allowing no one to be his equal, but not impatient in making

good his claims; grand, handsome, lavish when policy required it, rapacious when much needed, never self-indulgent, heartless, false, cruel, politic, ambitious, very brave, and a Roman to the backbone. But he had this failing, this weakness;—when the time for the last struggle came, he did not quite know what it was that he desired to do; he did not clearly see his future. The things to be done were so great, that he had not ceased to doubt concerning them when the moment came in which doubt was fatal. Cæsar saw it all, and never doubted. That little tale of Cæsar standing on the bridge over the Rubicon pondering as to his future course,—divided between obedience and rebellion,—it is very pretty. But there was no such pondering, and no such division. Cæsar knew very well what he meant and what he wanted.

Cæsar is full of his wrongs as he begins his second narrative. He tells us how his own friends are silenced in the Senate and in the city; how his enemies, Scipio, Cato, and Lentulus the consul, prevail; how no one is allowed to say a word for him. “Pompey himself,” he says, “urged on by the enemies of Cæsar, and because he was unwilling that any one should equal himself in honor, had turned himself altogether from Cæsar’s friendship, and had gone back to the fellowship of their common enemies,—enemies whom he himself had created for Cæsar during the time of their alliance. At the same time, conscious of the scandal of those two legions which he had stopped on their destined road to Asia and Syria and taken into his own hand, he was anxious that the question should be referred to arms.” Those two legions are very grievous to Cæsar. One was the legion which, as we remember, Pompey had given up to friendship,—and the



Republic. When, in the beginning of these contests between the two rivals, the Senate had decided on weakening each by demanding from each a legion, Pompey had asked Cæsar for the restitution of that which he had so kindly lent. Cæsar, too proud to refuse payment of the debt, had sent that to his former friend, and had also sent another legion, as demanded to the Senate. They were required nominally for service in the East, and now were in the hands of him who had been Cæsar's friend but had become his enemy. It is no wonder that Cæsar talks of the infamy or scandal of the two legions! He repeats his complaint as to the two legions again and again.

In the month of January Cæsar was at Ravenna, just north of the Rubicon, and in his own province. Messages pass between him and the Senate, and he proposes his terms. The Senate also proposes its terms. He must lay down his arms, or he will be esteemed an enemy by the Republic. All Rome is disturbed. The account is Cæsar's account but we imagine that Rome was disturbed. "Soldiers are recruited over all Italy; arms are demanded, taxes are levied on the municipalities, and money is taken from the sacred shrines; all laws divine and human are disregarded." Then Cæsar explains to his soldiers his wrongs, and the crimes of Pompey. He tells them how they, under his guidance, have been victorious, how under him they have "pacified" all Gaul and Germany, and he calls upon them to defend him who has enabled them to do such great things. He has but one legion with him, but that legion declares that it will obey him,—him and the tribunes of the people, some of whom, acting on Cæsar's side, have come over from Rome to Ravenna. We can appreciate the spirit of this allusion to the

tribunes, so that there may seem to be still some link between Cæsar and the civic authorities. When the soldiers have expressed their goodwill, he goes to Ariminum, and so the Rubicon is passed.

There are still more messages. Cæsar expresses himself as greatly grieved that he should be subjected to so much suspense, nevertheless he is willing to suffer anything for the Republic;—"omnia pati reipublicæ causâ." Only let Pompey go to his province, let the legions in and about Rome be disbanded, let all the old forms of free government be restored, and panic be abolished, and then,—when that is done,—all difficulties may be settled in a few minutes' talking. The consuls and Pompey send back word that if Cæsar will go back into Gaul and dismiss his army, Pompey shall go at once to Spain. But Pompey and the consuls with their troops will not stir till Cæsar shall have given security for his departure. Each demands that the other shall first abandon his position. Of course all these messages mean nothing.

Cæsar, complaining bitterly of injustice, sends a portion of his small army still farther into the Roman territory. Marc Antony goes to Arezzo with five cohorts, and Cæsar occupies three other cities with a cohort each. The marvel is that he was not attacked and driven back by Pompey. We may probably conclude that the soldiers, though under the command of Pompey, were not trustworthy as against Cæsar. As Cæsar regrets his two legions, so no doubt do the two legions regret their commander. At any rate, the consular forces with Pompey and the consuls and a host of senators retreat southwards to Brundisium,—Brindisi,—intended to leave Italy by the port which we shall all use before long when we go eastwards.

During this retreat, the first blood in the civil war is spilt at Corfinium, a town which, if it now stood at all, would stand in the Abruzzi. Cæsar there is victor in a small engagement, and obtains possession of the town. The Pompeian officers whom he finds there he sends away, and allows them even to carry with them money which he believes to have been taken from the public treasury. Throughout his route southward the soldiers of Pompey, who had heretofore been his soldiers,—return to him. Pompey and the consuls still retreat, and still Cæsar follows them, though Pompey had boasted, when first warned to beware of Cæsar, that he had only to stamp upon Italian soil and legions would arise from the earth ready to obey him. He knows, however, that away from Rome, in her provinces, in Macedonia and Achaia, in Asia and Cilicia, in Sicily, Sardinia, and Africa, in Mauritania and the two Spains, there are Roman legions which as yet know no Cæsar. It may be better for Pompey that he should stamp his foot somewhere out of Italy. At any rate he sends the obedient consuls and his attendant senators over to Dyrrachium in Illyria with a part of his army, and follows with the remainder as soon as Cæsar is at his heels. Cæsar makes an effort to intercept him and his fleet, but in that he fails. Thus Pompey deserts Rome and Italy,—and never again sees the imperial city or the fair land.

Cæsar explains to us why he does not follow his enemy and endeavor at once to put an end to the struggle. Pompey is provided with shipping and he is not; and he is aware that the force of Rome lies in her provinces. Moreover, Rome may be starved by Pompey, unless he, Cæsar, can take care that the corn-growing countries, which are the granaries of Rome,

are left free for the use of the city. He must make sure of the two Gauls, and of Sardinia, and of Sicily, of Africa too, if it may be possible. He must win to his cause the two Spains, of which at least the northern province was at present devoted to Pompey. He sends one lieutenant to Sardinia with a legion, another to Sicily with three legions,—and from Sicily over into Africa. These provinces have been allotted to partisans of Pompey; but Cæsar is successful with them all. To Cato, the virtuous man, had been assigned the government of Sicily; but Cato finds no Pompeian army ready for his use, and, complaining bitterly that he has been deceived and betrayed by the head of his faction, runs away, and leaves his province to Cæsar's officers. Cæsar determines that he himself will carry the war into Spain.

But he found it necessary first to go to Rome, and Cæsar, in his account of what he did there, hardly tells us the whole truth. We quite go along with him when he explains to us that, having collected what sort of a Senate he could,—for Pompey had taken away with him such senators as he could induce to follow him,—and having proposed to this meagre Senate that ambassadors should be sent to Pompey, the Senate accepted his suggestion; but that nobody could be induced to go on such an errand. Pompey had already declared that all who remained in Rome were his enemies. And it may probably be true that Cæsar, as he says, found a certain tribune of the people at Rome who opposed him in all that he was doing, though we should imagine that the opposition was not violent. But his real object in going to Rome was to lay hand on the treasure of the Republic,—the *sanctius ærarium*,—which was kept in the temple of Saturn for special

emergencies of State. That he should have taken this we do not wonder;—but we do wonder that he should have taken the trouble to say that he did not do so. He professes that he was so hindered by that vexatious tribune, that he could not accomplish the purposes for which he had come. But he certainly did take the money, and we cannot doubt but that he went to Rome especially to get it.

Cæsar, on his way to Spain, goes to Marseilles which, under the name of Massilia, was at this time, as it is now, the most thriving mercantile port on the Mediterranean. It belonged to the province of Further Gaul, but it was in fact a colony of Greek traders. Its possession was now necessary to Cæsar. The magistrates of the town, when called upon for their adhesion, gave a most sensible answer. They protest that they are very fond of Cæsar, and very fond of Pompey. They don't understand all these affairs of Rome, and regret that two such excellent men should quarrel. In the mean time they prefer to hold their own town. Cæsar speaks of this decision as an injury to himself, and is instigated by such wrongs against him to besiege the city, which he does both by land and sea, leaving officers there for the purpose, and going on himself to Spain.

At this time all Spain was held by three officers, devoted to the cause of Pompey, though, from what has gone before, it is clear that Cæsar fears nothing from the south. Afranius commanded in the north and east, holding the southern spurs of the Pyrenees. Petreius, who was stationed in Lusitania, in the south-west, according to the agreement, hurries up to the assistance of Afranius as soon as Cæsar approaches. The Pompeian and Cæsarian armies are brought into

close quarters in the neighborhood of Ilerda (Lerida), on the little river Sicoris, or Segre, which runs into the Ebro. They are near the mountains here, and the nature of the fighting is controlled by the rapidity and size of the rivers, and the inequality of the ground. Cæsar describes the campaign with great minuteness, imparting to it a wonderful interest by the clearness of his narrative. Afranius and Petreius hold the town of Ilerda, which is full of provisions. Cæsar is very much pressed by want, as the corn and grass have not yet grown, and the country supplies of the former year are almost exhausted. So great are his difficulties, that tidings reach Rome that Afranius has conquered him. Hearing this, many who were still clinging to the city, doubtful as to the side they would take, go away to Pompey. But Cæsar at last manages to make Ilerda too hot for the Pompeian generals. He takes his army over one river in coracles, such as he had seen in Britain; he turns the course of another; fords a third, breaking the course of the stream by the bulk of his horses; and bridges a fourth. Afranius and Petreius find that they must leave Ilerda, and escape over the Ebro among the half-barbarous tribe further south, and make their way, if possible, among the Celtibri,—getting out of Aragon into Castile, as the division was made in after-ages. Cæsar gives us as one reason for this intended march on the part of his enemies, that Pompey was well known by those tribes, but that the name of Cæsar was a name as yet obscure to the barbarians. It was not however, easy for Afranius to pass over the Ebro without Cæsar's leave, and Cæsar will by no means give him leave. He intercepts the Pompeians, and now turns upon them that terrible engine of want from which he had suffered so much.



He continues so to drive them about, still north of the Ebro, that they can get at no water; and at last they are compelled to surrender.

During the latter days of this contest the Afranians, as they are called—Roman legionaries, as are the soldiers of Cæsar—fraternize with their brethren in Cæsar's camp, and there is something of free intercourse between the two Roman armies. The upshot is that the soldiers of Afranius resolve to give themselves up to Cæsar, bargaining, however, that their own generals shall be secure. Afranius is willing enough; but his brother-general, Petreius, with more of the Roman at heart, will not hear of it. We shall hear hereafter the strange fate of this Petreius. He stops the conspiracy with energy, and forces from his own men, and even from Afranius, an oath against surrender. He orders that all Cæsar's soldiers found in their camp shall be killed, and, as Cæsar tells us, brings back the affair to the old form of war. But it is all of no avail. The Afranians are so driven by the want of water, that the two generals are at last compelled to capitulate and lay down their arms.

Five words which are used by Cæsar in the description of this affair give us a strong instance of his conciseness in the use of words, and of the capability for conciseness which the Latin language affords. "*Pre-mebantur Afraniani pabulatione, aquabantur ægre.*" "The soldiers of Afranius were much distressed in the matter of forage, and could obtain water only with great difficulty." These twenty words translate those five which Cæsar uses, perhaps with fair accuracy; but many more than twenty would probably have been used by any English historian in dealing with the same facts.

Cæsar treats his compatriots with the utmost generosity. So many conquered Gauls he would have sold

as slaves, slaughtering their leaders, or he would have cut off their hands, or have driven them down upon the river and have allowed them to perish in the waters. But his conquered foes are Roman soldiers, and he simply demands that the army of Afranius shall be disbanded, and that the leaders of it shall go, —whither they please. He makes them a speech in which he explains how badly they have treated him. Nevertheless he will hurt no one. He has borne it all, and will bear it, patiently. Let the generals only leave the Province, and let the army which they have led be disbanded. He will not keep a soldier who does not wish to stay with him, and will even pay those whom Afranius has been unable to pay out of his own funds. Those who have houses and land in Spain may remain there. Those who have none he will first feed and afterwards take back, if not to Italy, at any rate to the borders of Italy. The property which his own soldiers have taken from them in the chances of war shall be restored, and he out of his own pocket will compensate his own men. He performs his promise, and takes all those who do not choose to remain, to the banks of the Var, which divides the Province from Italy, and there sets them down, full, no doubt, of gratitude to their conqueror. Never was there such clemency,—or, we may say, better policy! Cæsar's whole campaign in Spain had occupied him only forty days.

In the meantime Decimus Brutus, to whom we remember that Cæsar had given the command of the ships which he prepared against the Veneti in the west of Gaul, and who was hereafter to be one of those who slew him in the Capitol, obtains a naval victory over the much more numerous fleet of the Massilians,

They had prepared seventeen big ships,—“naves longæ” they are called by Cæsar,—and of these Brutus either destroys or takes nine. In his next book Cæsar proceeds to tell us how things went on at Marseilles both by sea and land after this affair.

## CHAPTER X.

SECOND BOOK OF THE CIVIL WAR.—THE TAKING OF MARSEILLES.—VARRO IN THE SOUTH OF SPAIN.—THE FATE OF CURIO BEFORE UTICA.—B.C. 49.

IN his chronicle of the Gallic war, Cæsar in each book completed the narrative of a year's campaign. In treating of the civil war he devotes the first and second books to the doings of one year. There are three distinct episodes of the year's campaign narrated in the second;—the taking of Marseilles, the subjugation of the southern province of Spain,—if that can be said to be subjugated which gave itself up very readily,—and the destruction of a Roman army in Africa under the hands of a barbarian king. But of all Cæsar's writings it is perhaps the least interesting, as it tells us but little of what Cæsar did himself,—and in fact contains chiefly Cæsar records of the doings of his lieutenants by sea and land.

He begins by telling us of the enormous exertions made both by the besiegers and by the besieged at Masilia, which town was now held by Domitius on the part of Pompey,—to supplement whom at sea certain Nasidius was sent with a large fleet. Young Brutus, as will be remembered, was attacking the harbor on behalf of Cæsar, and had already obtained a

victory over the Massilians before Nasidius came up; and Trebonius, also on the part of Cæsar, was besieging the town from the land. This Decimus Brutus was one of those conspirators who afterwards conspired against Cæsar and slew him,—and Trebonius was another of the number. The wise Greeks of the city,—more wise than fortunate, however,—had explained to Cæsar when he first expressed his wish to have the town on his side, that really to them there was no difference between Pompey and Cæsar, both of whom they loved with all their hearts,—but they had been compelled to become partisans of Pompey, the Pompeian general Domitius being the first to enter their town; and now they find themselves obliged to fight as Pompeians in defence of their wealth and their homes. Thus driven by necessity, they fight well and do their very best to favor the side which we must henceforward call that of the Republic as against an autocrat;—for, during this siege of Marseilles, Cæsar had been appointed Dictator, and a law to that effect had been passed at Rome, where the passing of such a law was no doubt easy enough in the absence of Pompey, of the consuls, and of all the senators who were Pompey's friends.

The Massilians had now chosen their side, and they do their very best. We are told that the Cæsarean troops, from the high ground on which Trebonius had placed his camp, could look down into the town, and could see “how all the youth who had been left in the city, and all the elders with their children and wives, and the sentinels of the city, either stretched their hands to heaven from the walls, or, entering the temples of the immortal gods, and throwing themselves before their sacred images, prayed that the heavenly powers would give them victory. Nor was there one

among them who did not believe that on the result of that day depended all that they had,"—namely, liberty, property and life; for the Massilians, doubtless, had heard of Avaricum, of Alesia, and of Uxellodunum. "When the battle was begun," says Cæsar, "the Massilians failed not at all in valor; but, mindful of the lessons they had just received from their townsmen, fought with the belief that the present was their only opportunity of doing aught for their own preservation; and that to those who should fall in battle, loss of life would only come a little sooner than to the others, who would have to undergo the same fate, should the city be taken." Cæsar, as he wrote this, doubtless thought of what he had done in Gaul when policy demanded from him an extremity of cruelty; and, so writing, he enhanced the clemency with which, as he is about to tell us, he afterwards treated the Massilians. When the time came it did not suit him to depopulate a rich town, the trade of whose merchants was beneficial both to Rome and to the Province. He is about to tell us of his mercy, and therefore explains to us beforehand how little was mercy expected from him. We feel that every line he writes is weighed, though the time for such weighing must have been very short with one whose hands were so full as were always the hands of Cæsar.

Nasidius, whom we may call Pompey's admiral, was of no use at all. The Massilians, tempted by his coming, attack bravely the ship which bears the flag of young Brutus; but young Brutus is too quick for them, and the unhappy Massilians run two of their biggest vessels against each other in their endeavor to pin that of the Cæsarean admiral between them. The Massilian fleet is utterly dispersed. Five are



sunk, four are taken: one gets off with Nasidius, who runs away, making no effort to fight; who has been sent there,—so Cæsar hints,—by Pompey, not to give assistance, but only to pretend to give assistance. One ship gets back into the harbor with the sad tidings; and the Massilians—despairing only for a moment at the first blush of the bad news—determine that their walls may still be defended.

The town was very well supplied with such things as were needed for defence, the people being a provident people, well instructed and civilized, with means at their command. We are told of great poles twelve feet long, with sharp iron heads to them, which the besiegers could throw with such force from the engines on their walls as to drive them through four tiers of the wicked crates or stationary shields which the Cæsareans built up for their protection,—believing that no force could drive a weapon through them. As we read of this we cannot but think of Armstrong and Whitfield guns, and iron plates, and granite batteries, and earthworks. These terrible darts, thrown from “*balistæ*,” are very sore upon the Cæsareans; they therefore contrive an immense tower, so high that it cannot be reached by any weapon, so built that no wood or material subject to fire shall be on the outside,—which they erect story by story, of very great strength. And as they raise this step by step, each story is secured against fire and against the enemy. The reader,—probably not an engineer himself,—is disposed to think as he struggles through this minute description of the erection which Cæsar gives, and endeavors to realize the way in which it is done, that Cæsar must himself have served specially as an engineer. But in truth he was not at this siege himself, and had

nothing to do with the planning of the tower, and must in this instance at least have got a written description from his officer,—as he probably did before when he built the memorable bridge over the Rhine. And when the tower is finished, they make a long covered way or shed,—*musculum* or muscle Cæsar calls it; and with this they form for themselves a passage from the big tower to a special point in the walls of the town. This muscle is so strong with its sloping roof that nothing thrown upon it will break or burn it. The Massilians try tubs of flaming pitch, and great fragments of rock; but these simply slip to the ground, and are pulled away with long poles and forks. And the Cæsareans, from the height of their great tower, have so terrible an advantage! The Massilians cannot defend their wall, and a breach is made, or almost made.

The Massilians can do no more. The very gods are against them. So they put on the habit of supplicants, and go forth to the conquerors. They will give their city to Cæsar. Cæsar is expected. Will Trebonius be so good as to wait till Cæsar comes? If Trebonius should proceed with his work so that the soldiers should absolutely get into the town, then;—Trebonius knows very well what would happen then. A little delay cannot hurt. Nothing shall be done till Cæsar comes. As it happens, Cæsar has already especially ordered that the city shall be spared; and a kind of truce is made, to endure till Cæsar shall come and take possession. Trebonius has a difficulty in keeping his soldiers from the plunder; but he does restrain them, and besiegers and besieged are at rest, and wait for Cæsar.

But these Massilians are a crafty people. The Cæsarean soldiers, having agreed to wait, take it

easily, and simply amuse themselves in these days of waiting. When they are quite off their guard, and a high wind favors the scheme, the Massilians rush out and succeed in burning the tower, and the muscle, and the rampart, and the sheds, and all the implements. Even though the tower was built with brick, it burns freely,—so great is the wind. Then Trebonius goes to work, and does it all again. Because there is no more wood left round about the camp, he makes a rampart of a new kind,—hitherto unheard of,—with bricks. Doubtless the Cæsarean soldiers had first to make the bricks, and we can imagine what were their feelings in reference to the Massilians. But however that may be, they worked so well and so hard that the Massilians soon see that their late success is of no avail. Nothing is left to them. Neither perfidy nor valor can avail them, and now again they give themselves up. They are starved and suffering from pestilence, their fortifications are destroyed, they have no hope of aid from without,—and now they give themselves up,—intending no fraud. “*Sese dedere sine fraude constituunt.*” Domitius, the Pompeian general, manages to escape in a ship. He starts with three ships, but the one in which he himself sails alone escapes the hands of “young” Brutus. Surely now will Marseilles be treated with worse treatment than that which fell on the Gaulish cities. But such is by no means Cæsar’s will. Cæsar takes their public treasure and their ships, and reminding them that he spares them rather for their name and old character than for any merits of theirs shown towards him, leaves two legions among them, and goes to Rome. At Avaricum, when the Gauls had fought to defend their own liberties, he had destroyed everybody;—at Alesia he had decreed the

death of every inhabitant when they had simply asked him leave to pass through his camp;—at Uxellodunum he had cut off the hands and poked out the eyes of Gauls who had dared to fight for their country. But the Gauls were barbarians whom it was necessary that Cæsar should pacify. The Massilians were Greeks, and a civilized people,—and might be useful.

Before coming on to Marseilles there had been a little more for Cæsar to do in Spain, where, as was told in the last chapter, he had just compelled Afranius and Petreius to lay down their arms and disband their legions. Joined with them had been a third Pompeian general, one Varro,—a distinguished man, though not, perhaps, a great general,—of whom Cæsar tells us that with his Roman policy he veered between Pompeian and Cæsarean tactics till, unfortunately for himself, he declared for Pompey and the wrong side, when he heard that Afranius was having his own way in the neighborhood of Lerida. But Varro is in the south of Spain, in Andalusia,—or Bætica, as it was then called,—and in this southern province of Spain it seems that Cæsar's cause was more popular than that of Pompey. Cæsar, at any rate, has but little difficulty with Varro. The Pompeian officer is deserted by his legions, and gives himself up very quickly. Cæsar does not care to tell us what he did with Varro, but we know that he treated his brother Roman with the utmost courtesy. Varro was a very learned man, and a friend of Cicero's, and one who wrote books, and was a credit to Rome as a man of letters if not as a general. We are told that he wrote 490 volumes, and that he lived to be eighty-eight,—a fate very uncommon with Romans who meddled with public affairs in these days. Cæsar made everything smooth in the south of Spain, restoring the

money and treasures which Varro had taken from the towns, and giving thanks to everybody. Then he went on over the Pyrenees to Marseilles, and made things smooth there.

But in the mean time things were not at all smooth in Africa. The name of Africa was at this time given to a small province belonging to the Republic, lying to the east of Numidia, in which Carthage had stood when Carthage was a city, containing that promontory which juts out towards Sicily, and having Utica as its Roman capitol. It has been already said that when Cæsar determined to gain possession of certain provinces of the Republic before he followed Pompey across the Adriatic, he sent a lieutenant with three legions into Sicily, desiring him to go on to Africa as soon as things should have been arranged in the island after the Cæsarean fashion. The Sicilian matter is not very troublesome, as Cato, the virtuous man, in whose hands the government of the island had been intrusted on behalf of the Republic, leaves it on the arrival of the Cæsarean legions, complaining bitterly of Pompey's conduct. Then Cæsar's lieutenant goes over to Africa with two legions, as commanded, proposing to his army the expulsion of one Attius Varus, who had, according to Cæsar's story, taken irregular possession of the province, keeping it on behalf of Pompey, but not allowing the governor appointed by the Republic so much as to put his foot on the shore. This lieutenant was a great favorite of Cæsar, by name Curio, who had been elected tribune of the people just when the Senate was making its attempt to recall Cæsar from his command in Gaul. In that emergency, Curio as tribune had been of service to Cæsar, and Cæsar loved the young man. He was one

of those who, though noble by birth, had flung themselves among the people, as Catiline had done and Clodius,—unsteady, turbulent, unscrupulous, vicious, needy, fond of pleasure, rapacious, but well educated, brave, and clever. Cæsar himself had been such a man in his youth, and could easily forgive such faults in the character of one who, in addition to such virtues as have been named, possessed that farther and greater virtue of loving Cæsar. Cæsar expected great things from Curio, and trusted him thoroughly. Curio, with many ships and his two legions, lands in Africa, and prepares to win the province for his great friend. He does obtain some little advantage, so that he is called “Imperator” by his soldiers,—a name not given to a general till he has been victorious in the field; but it seems clear, from Cæsar’s telling of the story, that Curio’s own officers and own soldiers distrusted him, and were doubtful whether they would follow him, or would take possession of the ships and return to Sicily;—or would go over to Attius Varus, who had been their commander in Italy before they had deserted from Pompey to Cæsar. A council of war is held, and there is much doubt. It is not only or chiefly of Attius Varus, their Roman enemy, that they are afraid; but there is Juba in their neighborhood, the king of Numidia, who will certainly fight for Varus and against Curio. He is Pompey’s declared friend, and equally declared as Cæsar’s foe. He has, too, special grounds of quarrel against Curio himself; and if he comes in person with his army,—bringing such an army as he can bring if he pleases,—it will certainly go badly with Curio, should Curio be distant from his camp. Then Curio, not content with his council of war, and anxious that his soldiers should support him



in his desire to fight, makes a speech to the legions. We must remember, of course, that Cæsar gives us the words of this speech, and that Cæsar must himself have put the words together.

It is begun in the third person. He,—that is Curio,—tells the men how useful they were to Cæsar at Corfinium, the town at which they went over from Pompey to Cæsar. But in the second sentence he breaks into the first person and puts the very words into Curio's mouth. "For you and your services," he says "were copied by all the towns; nor is it without cause that Cæsar thinks kindly of you, and the Pompeians unkindly. For Pompey, having lost no battle, but driven by the result of your deed, fled from Italy. Me, whom Cæsar holds most dear, and Sicily and Africa without which he cannot hold Rome and Italy, Cæsar has intrusted to your honor. There are some who advise you to desert me,—for what can be more desirable to such men than they at the same time should circumvent me, and fasten upon you a foul crime?

. . . . But you,—have you not heard of the things done by Cæsar in Spain,—two armies beaten, two generals conquered, two provinces gained, and all this done in forty days from that on which Cæsar first saw his enemy? can those who, uninjured, were unable to stand against him, resist him now that they are conquered? And you, who followed Cæsar when victory on his side was uncertain, now that fortune has declared herself, will you go over to the conquered side when you are about to realize the reward of your zeal? . . . . But perhaps, though you love Cæsar, you distrust me. I wilt not say much of my own deserts towards you,—which are indeed less as yet than I had wished or you had expected." Then, having

thus declared that he will not speak of himself, he does venture to say a few words on the subject. "But why should I pass over my own work, and the result that has been as yet achieved, and my own fortune in war? Is it displeasing to you that I brought over the whole army, safe, without losing a ship? That, as I came, at my first onslaught, I should have dispersed the fleet of the enemy? That, in two days, I should have been twice victorious with my cavalry; that I should have cut out two hundred transports from the enemy's harbor; that I should have so harassed the enemy that neither by land nor sea could they get food to supply their wants? Will it please you to repudiate such fortune and such guidance, and to connect yourself with the disgrace at Corfinium, the flight from Italy,"—namely, Pompey's flight to Dyrrachium,—“the surrender of Spain, and the evils of this African war? I indeed have wished to be called Cæsar's soldier, and you have called me your Imperator. If it repents you of having done so, I give you back the compliment. Give me back my own name, lest it seem that in scorn you have called me by that title of honor.”

This is very spirited; and the merely rhetorical assertion by Cæsar that Curio thus spoke to his soldiers is in itself interesting, as showing us the way in which the legionaries were treated by their commanders, and in which the greatest general, of that or of any age, thought it natural that a leader should address his troops. It is of value, also, as showing the difficulty of keeping any legion true to either side in a civil war, in which, on either side, the men must fight for a commander they had learned to respect, and against a commander they respected,—the com-

mander in each case being a Roman Emperor. Curio, too, as we know, was a man who on such an occasion could use words. But that he used the words here put into his mouth, or any words like them, is very improbable. Cæsar was anxious to make the best apology he could for the gallant young friend who had perished in his cause, and has shown his love by making the man he loved memorable to all posterity.

But before the dark hour comes upon him the young man has a gleam of success, which, had he really spoken the words put into his mouth by Cæsar, would have seemed to justify them. He attacks the army of his fellow-Roman, Varus, and beats it, driving it back into Utica. He then resolves to besiege the town, and Cæsar implies that he would have been successful through the Cæsarean sympathies of the townsmen,—had it not been for the approach of the terrible Juba. Then comes a rumor which reaches Curio,—and which reaches Varus too inside the town,—that the Numidian king is hurrying to the scene with all his forces. He has finished another affair that he had on hand, and can now look to his Roman friends,—and to his Roman enemies. Juba craftily sends forward his præfect, or lieutenant, Sabura, with a small force of cavalry, and Curio is led to imagine that Juba has not come, and that Sabura has been sent with scanty aid to the relief of Varus. Surely he can give a good account of Sabura and that small body of Numidian horsemen. We see from the very first that Curio is doomed. Cæsar, in a few touching words, makes his apology. “The young man’s youth had much to do with it, and his high spirit; his former success, too, and his own faith in his own good fortune.” There is

no word of reproach. Curio makes another speech to his soldiers. "Hasten to your prey," he says, "hasten to your glory!" They do hasten,—after such a fashion that when the foremost of them reach Sabura's troops, the hindermost of them are scattered far back on the road. They are cut to pieces by Juba. Curio is invited by one of his officers to escape back to his tent. But Cæsar tells us that Curio in that last moment replied that having lost the army with which Cæsar had trusted him, he would never again look Cæsar in the face. That he did say some such words as these, and that they were repeated by that officer to Cæsar, is probable enough. "So fighting he is slain;"—and there is an end of the man whom Cæsar loved.

What then happened was very sad for a Roman army. Many hurry down to the ships at the sea; but there is so much terror, so much confusion, and things are so badly done, that but very few get over to Sicily. The remainder endeavor to give themselves up to Varus; after doing which, could they have done it, their position would not have been very bad. A Roman surrendering to a Roman would, at the worst, but find that he was compelled to change his party. But Juba comes up and claims them as his prey, and Varus does not dare to oppose the barbarian king. Juba kills the most of them, but sends a few, whom he thinks may serve his purpose and add to his glory, back to his own kingdom. In doing which Juba behaved no worse than Cæsar habitually behaved in Gaul; but Cæsar always writes as though not only a Roman must regard a Roman as more than a man, but as though also all others must so regard Romans. And by making such assertions in their own behalf, Romans were so regarded. We are then told that the barbarian king of Numidia rode

into Utica triumphant, with Roman senators in his train; and the names of two special Roman Senators Cæsar sends down to prosterity as having been among that base number. As far as we can spare them, they shall be spared.

Of Juba the king, and of his fate, we shall hear again.

## CHAPTER XI.

THIRD BOOK OF THE CIVIL WAR.—CÆSAR FOLLOWS POMPEY INTO ILLYRIA.—THE LINES OF PETRA AND THE BATTLE OF PHARSALIA.—B.C. 48.

CÆSAR begins the last book of his last Commentary by telling us that this was the year in which he Cæsar, was by the law permitted to name a consul. He names Publius Servilius to act in conjunction with himself. The meaning of this is, that, as Cæsar had been created Dictator, Pompey having taken with him into Illyria the consuls of the previous year, Cæsar was now the only magistrate under whose authority a consul could be elected. No doubt he did choose the man, but the election was supposed to have been made in accordance with the form of the Republic. He remained at Rome as Dictator for eleven days, during which he made various laws, of which the chief object was to lessen the insecurity caused by the disruption of the ordinary course of things; and then he went down to Brindisi on the track of Pompey. He had twelve legions with him, but he was badly off for ships in which to transport them; and he owns that the health of the men is bad, an autumn in the south of Italy having been very severe on men accustomed to the healthy climate of Gaul and the north of Spain. Pompey, he tells us, had had a



whole year to prepare his army,—a whole year, without warfare, and had collected men and ships and money, and all that support which assent gives, from Asia and the Cyclades, from Corcyra, Athens, Bithynia, Cilicia, Phœnicia, Egypt, and the free states of Achaia. He had with him nine Roman legions, and is expecting two more with his father-in-law Scipio out of Syria. He has three thousand archers from Crete, from Sparta, and from Pontus; he has twelve hundred slingers, and he has seven thousand cavalry from Galatia, Cappadocia, and Thrace. A valorous prince from Macedonia had brought him two hundred men, all mounted. Five hundred of Galatian and German cavalry, who had been left to overawe Ptolemy in Egypt, are brought to Pompey by the filial care of young Cnæus. He too had armed eight hundred of their own family retainers, and had brought them armed. Antiochus of Commagena sends him two hundred mounted archers,—mercenaries, however, not sent without promise of high payment. Dardani,—men from the land of old Troy, Bessi, from the banks of the Hebrus, Thessalians and Macedonians, have all been crowded together under Pompey's standard. We feel that Cæsar's mouth waters as he recounts them. But we feel also that he is preparing for the triumphant record in which he is about to tell us that all these swarms did he scatter to the winds of heaven with the handful of Roman legionaries which he at last succeeded in landing on the shores of Illyria.

Pompey has also collected from all parts "*frumenti vim maximam*"—"a great power of corn indeed," as an Irishman would say, translating the words literally. And he has covered the seas with his ships, so as to hinder Cæsar from coming out of Italy. He has eight

vice-admirals to command his various fleets,—all of whom Cæsar names; and over them all, as admiral-in-chief, is Bibulus, who was joint-consul with Cæsar before Cæsar went to Gaul, and who was so harassed during his consulship by the Cæsareans that he shut himself up in his house, and allowed Cæsar to rule as sole consul. Now he is about to take his revenge; but the vengeance of such a one as Bibulus cannot reach Cæsar.

Cæsar having led his legions to Brindisi, makes them a speech which almost beats in impudence anything that he ever said or did. He tells them that as they have now nearly finished all his work for him,—they have only got to lay low the Republic with Pompey the Great, and all the forces of the Republic—to which, however, have to be added King Ptolemy in Egypt, King Pharnaces in Asia, and King Juba in Numidia;—they had better leave behind them at Brindisi all their little property, the spoils of former wars, so that they may pack the tighter in the boats in which he means to send them across to Illyria,—if only they can escape the mercies of ex-Consul Admiral Bibulus. There is no suggestion that at any future time they will recover their property. For their future hopes they are to trust entirely to Cæsar's generosity. With one shout they declare their readiness to obey him. He takes over seven legions, escaping the dangers of those "rocks of evil fame," the Acroceraunia of which Horace tells us, —and escaping Bibulus also, who seems to have shut himself up in his ship as he did before in his house during the consulship. Cæsar seems to have made the passage with the conviction that had he fallen into the hands of Bibulus everything would have been lost. And with ordinary precaution and diligence on the part of

Bibulus such would have been the result. Yet he makes the attempt,—trusting to the Fortune of Cæsar,—and he succeeds. He lands at a place which he calls Palæste on the coast of Epirus, considerably to the south of Dyrrachium, in Illyria. At Dyrrachium Pompey had landed the year before, and there is now stored that wealth of provision of which Cæsar has spoken. But Bibulus at last determines to be active, and he does manage to fall upon the empty vessels which Cæsar sends back to fetch the remainder of his army. “Having come upon thirty of them, he falls upon them with all the wrath occasioned by his own want of circumspection and grief, and burns them. And in the same fire he kills the sailors and the masters of the vessels,—hoping to deter others,” Cæsar tells us, “by the severity of the punishment.” After that we are not sorry to hear that he potters about on the seas very busy, but still incapable, and that he dies, as it seems, of a broken heart. He does indeed catch one ship afterwards,—not laden with soldiers, but coming on a private venture, with children, servants, and suchlike, dependants and followers of Cæsar’s camp. All these, including the children, Bibulus slaughters, down to the smallest child. We have, however, to remember that the story is told by Cæsar, and that Cæsar did not love Bibulus.

Marc Antony has been left at Brindisi in command of the legions which Cæsar could not bring across at his first trip for want of sufficient ship-room, and is pressed very much by Cæsar to make the passage. There are attempts at treaties made, but as we read the account we feel that Cæsar is only obtaining the delay which is necessary to him till he shall have been joined by Antony. We are told how by this time the camps of

Cæsar and Pompey have been brought so near together that they are separated only by the river Apsus,—for Cæsar had moved northwards towards Pompey's stronghold. And the soldiers talked together across the stream; "nor, the while, was any weapon thrown,—by compact between those who talked." Then Cæsar sends Vatinius, as his ambassador, down to the river to talk of peace; and Vatinius demands with a loud voice "whether it should not be allowed to citizens to send legates to citizens, to treat of peace;—a thing that has been allowed even to deserters from the wilds of the Pyrenees and to robbers,—especially with so excellent an object as that of hindering citizens from fighting with citizens." This seems so reasonable, that a day is named, and Labienus,—who has deserted from Cæsar and become Pompeian,—comes to treat on one side of the river, and Vatinius on the other. But,—so Cæsar tells the story himself,—the Cæsarean soldiers throw their weapons at their old general. They probably cannot endure the voice or sight of one whom they regard as a renegade. Labienus escapes under the protection of those who are with him,—but he is full of wrath against Cæsar. "After this," says he, "let us cease to speak of treaties, for there can be no peace for us till Cæsar's head has been brought to us." But the colloquies over the little stream no doubt answered Cæsar's purpose.

Cæsar is very anxious to get his legions over from Italy, and even scolds Antony for not bringing them. There is a story,—which he does not tell himself,—that he put himself into a small boat, intending to cross over to Brindisi in a storm, to hurry matters, and that he encouraged the awe-struck master of the boat by reminding him that he would carry "Cæsar and his

fortunes." The story goes on to say that the sailors attempted the trip, but were driven back by the tempest.

At last there springs up a south-west wind, and Antony ventures with his flotilla,—although the war-ships of Pompey still hold the sea, and guard the Illyrian coast. But Cæsar's general is successful, and the second half of the Cæsarean army is carried northward by favoring breezes towards the shore in the very sight of Pompey and his soldiers at Dyrrachium. Two ships, however, lag behind and fall into the hands of one Otacilius, an officer belonging to Pompey. The two ships, one full of recruits and the other of veterans, agree to surrender, Otacilius having sworn that he will not hurt the men. "Here you may see," says Cæsar, "how much safety to men there is in presence of mind." The recruits do as they have undertaken, and give themselves up;—whereupon Otacilius, altogether disregarding his oath, like a true Roman, kills every man of them. But the veterans, disregarding their word also, and knowing no doubt to a fraction the worth of the word of Otacilius, run their ship ashore in the night, and, with much fighting get safe to Antony. Cæsar implies that the recruits even would have known better had they not been sea-sick; but that even bilge-water and bad weather combined had failed to touch the ancient courage of the veteran legionaries. They were still good men—"item conflictati et tempestatis et sentinæ vitiis."

We are then told how Metellus Scipio, coming out of Syria with his legions into Macedonia, almost succeeds in robbing the temple of Diana of Ephesus on his way. He gets together a body of senators, who are to give evidence that he counts the money fairly as he takes it out of the temple. But letters come from Pompey

just as he is in the act, and he does not dare to delay his journey even to complete so pleasant a transaction. He comes to meet Pompey and to share his command at the great battle that must soon be fought. We hear, too, how Cæsar sends his lieutenants into Thessaly and Ætolia and Macedonia, to try what friends he has there, to take cities, and to get food. He is now in a land which has seemed specially to belong to Pompey; but even here they have heard of Cæsar, and the Greeks are simply anxious to be friends with the strongest Roman of the day. They have to judge which will win, and to adhere to him. For the poor Greeks there is much difficulty in forming a judgment. Presently we shall see the way in which Cæsar gives a lesson on that subject to the citizens of Gomphi. In the mean time he joins his own forces to those lately brought by Antony out of Italy, and resolves that he will force Pompey to a fight.

We may divide the remainder of this last book of the second Commentary into two episodes,—the first being the story of what occurred within the lines at Petra, and the second the account of the crowning battle of Pharsalia. In the first Pompey was the victor,—but the victory, great as it was, has won from the world very little notice. In the second, as all the world knows, Cæsar was triumphant and henceforward dominant. And yet the affair at Petra should have made a Pharsalia unnecessary, and indeed impossible. Two reasons have conspired to make Pompey's complete success at Petra unimportant in the world's esteem. This Commentary was written not by Pompey but by Cæsar; and then, unfortunately for Pompey, Pharsalia was allowed to follow Petra.



It is not very easy to unravel Cæsar's story of the doings of the two armies at Petra. Nor, were this ever so easy, would our limits or the purport of this little volume allow us to attempt to give that narrative in full to our readers. Cæsar had managed to join the legions which he had himself brought from Italy with those which had crossed afterwards with Antony, and was now anxious for a battle. His men, though fewer in number than they who followed Pompey, were fit for fighting, and knew all the work of soldiering. Pompey's men were for the most part beginners;—but they were learning, and every week added to their experience was a week in Pompey's favor. With hope of forcing a battle, Cæsar managed to get his army between Dyrrachium, in which were kept all Pompey's stores and wealth of war, and the army of his opponent, so that Pompey, as regarded any approach by land, was shut off from Dyrrachium. But the sea was open to him. His fleet was everywhere on the coast, while Cæsar had not a ship that could dare to show its bow upon the waters.

There was a steep rocky promontory some few miles north of Dyrrachium, from whence there was easy access to the sea, called Petra, or the rock. At this point Pompey could touch the sea, but between Petra and Dyrrachium Cæsar held the country. Here, on this rock, taking in for the use of his army a certain somewhat wide amount of pasturage at the foot of the rock, Pompey placed his army, and made intrenchments all round from sea to sea, fortifying himself, as all Roman generals knew how to do, with a bank and ditch and twenty-four turrets and earthworks that would make the place absolutely impregnable. The length of his lines was fifteen Roman miles,—more than thirteen

English miles,—so that within his works he might have as much space as possible to give him grass for his horses. So placed, he had all the world at his back to feed him. Not only could he get at that wealth of stores which he had amassed at Dyrrachium, and which were safe from Cæsar, but the coasts of Greece, and Asia, and Egypt were open to his ships. Two things only were wanting to him,—sufficient grass for his horses, and water. But all things were wanting to Cæsar,—except grass and water. The Illyrian country at his back was one so unproductive, being rough and mountainous, that the inhabitants themselves were in ordinary times fed upon imported corn. And Pompey, foreseeing something of what might happen, had taken care to empty the store-houses and to leave the towns behind him destitute and impoverished.

Nevertheless Cæsar, having got the body of his enemy, as it were, imprisoned at Petra, was determined to keep his prisoner fast. So round and in front of Pompey's lines he also made other lines, from sea to sea. He began by erecting turrets and placing small detachments on the little hills outside Pompey's lines, so as to prevent his enemy from getting the grass. Then he joined these towers by lines, and in this way surrounded the other lines,—thinking that so Pompey would not be able to send out his horsemen for forage; and again, that the horses inside at Petra might gradually be starved; and again “that the reputation,”—“*auctoritatem*,”—“which in the estimation of foreign nations belonged chiefly to Pompey in this war, would be lessened when the story should have been told over the world that Pompey had been besieged by Cæsar, and did not dare to fight.”

We are, perhaps, too much disposed to think,—reading our history somewhat cursorily,—that Cæsar at this time was everybody, and that Pompey was hardly worthy to be his foe. Such passages in the Commentary as that above translated,—they are not many, but a few suffice,—show that this idea is erroneous. Up to this period in their joint courses Pompey had been the greater man; Cæsar had done very much, but Pompey had done more—and now he had on his side almost all that was wealthy and respectable in Rome. He led the Conservative party, and was still confident that he had only to bide his time, and that Cæsar must fall before him. Cæsar and the Cæsareans were to him as the spirits of the Revolution were in France to Louis XVI., to Charles X., and to Louis-Philippe, before they had made their powers credible and formidable; as the Reform Bill and Catholic Emancipation were to such men as George IV. and Lord Eldon, while yet they could be opposed and postponed. It was impossible to Pompey that the sweepings of Rome, even with Cæsar and Cæsar's army to help them, should at least prevail over himself and over the Roman Senate. “He was said at that time,” we are again translating Cæsar's words, “to have declared with boasts among his own people, that he would not himself deny that as a general he should be considered to be worthless if Cæsar's legions should now extricate themselves from the position in which they had rashly entangled themselves without very great loss”—“*maximo detrimento*”—loss that should amount wellnigh to destruction. And he was all but right in what he said.

There was a great deal of fighting for the plots of grass and different bits of vantage-ground,—fighting

which must have taken place almost entirely between the two lines. But Cæsar suffered under this disadvantage, that his works, being much the longest, required the greatest number of men to erect them and prolong them and keep them in order; whereas Pompey, who in this respect had the least to do, having the inner line, was provided with much the greater number of men to do it. Cæsar's men, being veterans, had always the advantage in the actual fighting; but in the mean time Pompey's untried soldiers were obtaining that experience which was so much needed by them. Nevertheless Pompey suffered very much. They could not get water on the rock, and when he attempted to sink wells, Cæsar so perverted the water-courses that the wells gave no water. Cæsar tells us that he even dammed up the streams, making little lakes to hold it, so that it should not trickle down in its underground courses to the comfort of his enemies; but we should have thought that any reservoirs so made must soon have overflown themselves, and have been useless for the intended purpose. In the mean time Cæsar's men had no bread but what was made of a certain wild cabbage,—“chara,”—which grew there, which they kneaded up with milk, and lived upon it cheerfully, though it was not very palatable. To show the Pompeians the sort of fare with which real veterans could be content to break their fasts, they threw loaves of this composition across the lines, for they were close together and could talk to each other, and the Pompeians did not hesitate to twit their enemies with their want of provisions. But the Cæsareans had plenty of water,—and plenty of meat; and they assure Cæsar that they would rather eat the bark off the trees than allow the Pompeians to escape them.

But there was always this for Cæsar to fear,—that Pompey should land a detachment behind his lines and attack him at the back. To hinder this Cæsar made another intrenchment, with ditch and bank, running at right angles from the shore, and was intending to join this to his main work by a transverse line of fortifications running along that short portion of the coast which lay between his first lines and the second, when there came upon him the disaster which nearly destroyed him. While he was digging his trenches and building his turrets the fighting was so frequent that, as Cæsar tells us, on one day there were six battles. Pompey lost two thousand legionaries, while Cæsar lost no more than twenty; but every Cæsarean engaged in a certain turret was wounded; and four officers lost their eyes. Cæsar estimates that thirty thousand arrows were thrown upon the men defending this tower, and tells us of one Scæva, an officer, who had two hundred and thirty holes made by these arrows in his own shield.\* We can only sur-

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\* Dean Merivale in his account of this affair reduces the number of holes in Scæva's shield to one hundred and twenty,—on the joint authority, no doubt, of Florus and Valerius Maximus; but Florus lived 200 and Val. Max. 300 years after Cæsar. Suetonius allows the full number of holes, but implies that 120 were received while the warrior was fighting in one place, and 110 while fighting in another. Lucan sings the story of Scæva at great length, but does not give the number of wounds in the shield. He seems to say that Scæva was killed on this occasion, but is not quite clear on the point. That Scæva had one eye knocked out is certain. Lucan does indeed tell us, in the very last lines of his poem, that in Egypt Cæsar once again saw his beloved centurian;—but at the moment described even Cæsar was dismayed, and the commentators doubt whether it was not Scæva's ghost that Cæsar then saw. Valerius Maximus is sure that Scæva was killed when he got the wounds;—but, if so, how could he have been rewarded and promoted? The matter has been very much disputed; but here it has been thought best to adhere to Cæsar.

mise that it must have been a very big shield, and that there must have been much trouble in counting the holes. Cæsar, however, was so much pleased that he gave Scæva a large sum of money,—something over £500, and, allowing him to skip over six intermediate ranks, made him at once first centurion—or Primipilus of the legion. We remember no other record of such quick promotion—in prose. There is, indeed, the well-known case of a common sailor who did a gallant action and was made first-lieutenant on the spot; but that is told in verse, and the common sailor was a lady.

Two perfidious Gauls to whom Cæsar had been very kind, but whom he had been obliged to check on account of certain gross peculations of which they had been guilty, though, as he tells us, he had not time to punish them, went over to Pompey, and told Pompey all the secrets of Cæsar's ditches, and forts, and mounds,—finished and unfinished. Before that, Cæsar assures us, not a single man of his had gone over to the enemy, though many of the enemy had come to him. But those perfidious Gauls did a world of mischief. Pompey, hearing how far Cæsar was from having his works along the sea-shore finished, got together a huge fleet of boats, and succeeded at night in throwing a large body of his men ashore between Cæsar's two lines, thus dividing Cæsar's forces, and coming upon them in their weakest point. Cæsar admits that there was a panic in his lines, and that the slaughter of his men was very great. It seems that the very size of his own works produced the ruin which befel them, for the different parts of them were divided one from another, so that the men in one position could not succor those in another. The affair ended in the total rout of the Cæsarean army. Cæsar actually fled, and had Pompey followed him we



must suppose that then there would have been an end of Cæsar. He acknowledges that in the two battles fought on that day he lost 960 legionaries, 32 officers, and 32 standards.

And then Cæsar tells us a story of Labienus, who had been his most trusted lieutenant in the Gallic wars, but who had now gone over to Pompey, not choosing to fight against the Republic. Labienus demanded of Pompey the Cæsarean captives, and caused them all to be slaughtered, asking them with scorn whether veterans such as they were accustomed to run away. Cæsar is very angry with Labienus; but Labienus might have defended himself by saying that the slaughter of prisoners of war was a custom he had learned in Gaul. As for those words of scorn, Cæsar could hardly have heard them with his own ears, and we can understand that he should take delight in saying a hard thing of Labienus.

Pompey was at once proclaimed Emperor. And Pompey used the name, though the victory had, alas! been gained over his fellow-countrymen. "So great was the effect of all this on the spirits and confidence of the Pompeians, that they thought no more of the carrying on of the war, but only of the victory they had gained." And then Cæsar throws scorn upon the Pompeians, making his own apology in the same words. "They did not care to remember that the small number of our soldiers was the cause of their triumph, or that the unevenness of the ground and narrowness of the defiles had aught to do with it; or the occupation of our lines, and the panic of our men between their double fortifications; or our army cut into two parts, so that one part could not help the other. Nor did they add to this the fact that our men,

pressed as they were, could not engage themselves in a fair conflict, and that they indeed suffered more from their own numbers, and from the narrowness of the ravines, than from the enemy. Nor were the ordinary chances of war brought to mind,—how small matters, such as some unfounded suspicion, a sudden panic, a remembered superstition, may create great misfortune; nor how often the fault of a general, or the mistake of an officer, may bring injury upon an army. But they spread abroad the report of the victory of that day throughout all the world, sending forth letters and tales as though they had conquered solely by their own valor, nor was it possible that there should after this be a reverse of their circumstances." Such was the affair of Petra, by which the relative position in the world-history of Cæsar and Pompey was very nearly made the reverse of what it is.

Cæsar now acknowledges that he is driven to change the whole plan of his campaign. He addresses a speech to his men, and explains to them that this defeat, like that at Gergovia, may lead to their future success. The victory at Alesia had sprung from the defeat of Gergovia, because the Gauls had been induced to fight; and from the reverses endured within the lines of Petra might come the same fortune;—for surely now the army of Pompey would not fear a battle. Some few officers he punishes and degrades. His own words respecting his army after their defeat are very touching. "So great a grief had come from this disaster upon the whole army, and so strong a desire of repairing its disgrace, that no one now desired the place of tribune or centurion in his legion; and all, by way of self-imposed punishment, subjected themselves to increased toil; and every man burned

with a desire to fight. Some from the higher ranks were so stirred by Cæsar's speech, that they thought that they should stand their ground where they were and fight where they stood." But Cæsar was too good a general for that. He moves on towards the south-east, and in retreating gets the better of Pompey, who follows him with only half a heart. After a short while Pompey gives up the pursuit. His father-in-law, Scipio, has brought a great army from the east, and is in Thessaly. As we read this we cannot fail to remember how short a time since it was that Cæsar himself was Pompey's father-in-law, and that Pompey was Cæsar's friend because, with too uxorious a love, he clung to Julia, his young wife. Pompey now goes eastward to unite his army to that of Scipio, and Cæsar, making his way also into Thessaly by a more southern route, joins certain forces under his lieutenant Calvinus, who had been watching Scipio, and who barely escaped falling into Pompey's hands before he could reach Cæsar. But wherever Fortune or Chance could interfere, the Gods were always kind to Cæsar.

Then Cæsar tells us of his treatment of two towns in Thessaly, Gomphi and Metropolis. Unluckily for the poor Gomphians, Cæsar reaches Gomphi first. Now the fame of Pompey's victory at Petra had been spread abroad; and the Gomphians, who, to give them their due,—would have been just as willing to favor Cæsar as Pompey, and who only wanted to be on the winning side that they might hold their little own in safety, believed that things were going badly with Cæsar. They therefore shut their gates against Cæsar, and sent off messengers to Pompey. They can hold their town against Cæsar for a little while, but Pompey

must come quickly to their aid. Pompey comes by no means quick enough, and the Gomphians' capacity to hold their own is very short-lived. At about three o'clock in the afternoon Cæsar begins to besiege the town, and before sunset he has taken it, and given it to be sacked by his soldiers. The men of Metropolis were also going to shut their gates, but luckily they hear just in time what had happened at Gomphi,—and open them instead. Whereupon Cæsar showers protection upon Metropolis; and all the other towns of Thessaly, hearing what had been done, learn what Cæsar's favor means.

Pompey, having joined his army to that of Scipio, shares all his honors with his father-in-law. When we hear this we know that Pompey's position was not comfortable, and that he was under constraint. He was a man who would share his honor with no one unless driven to do so. And indeed his command at present was not a pleasant one. It was much for a Roman commander to have with him the Roman Senate,—but the senators so placed would be apt to be less obedient than trained soldiers. They even accuse him of keeping them in Thessaly because he likes to lord it over such followers. But they were, nevertheless, all certain that Cæsar was about to be destroyed; and, even in Pompey's camp, they quarrel over the rewards of victory which they think that they will enjoy at Rome when their oligarchy shall have been re-established by Pompey's arms.

Before the great day arrives Labienus again appears on the scene; and Cæsar puts into his mouth a speech which he of course intends us to compare with the result of the coming battle. "Do not think, O Pompey, that this is the army which conquers Gaul

and Germany,"—where Labienus himself was second in command under Cæsar. "I was present at all those battles, and speak of a thing which I know. A very small party of that army remains. Many have perished,—as a matter of course in so many battles. The autumn pestilence killed many in Italy. Many have gone home. Many have been left on the other shore. Have you not heard from our own friends who remained behind sick, that these cohorts of Cæsar's were made up at Brindisi?"—made up but the other day, Labienus implies. "This army, indeed, has been renewed from levies in the two Gauls; but all that it had of strength perished in those two battles at Dyrrachium;"—in the contests, that is, within the lines of Petra. Upon this Labienus swears that he will not sleep under canvas again until he sleeps as victor over Cæsar; and Pompey swears the same, and everybody swears. Then they all go away full of the coming victory. We daresay there was a great deal of false confidence; but as for the words which Cæsar puts into the mouth of Labienus, we know well how much cause Cæsar had to dislike Labienus, and we doubt whether they were ever spoken.

At length the battle-field is chosen,—near the town of Pharsalus, on the banks of the river Enipeus in Thessaly. The battle has acquired world-wide fame as that of Pharsalia, which we have been taught to regard as the name of the plain on which it was fought. Neither of these names occur in the Commentary, nor does that of the river; and the actual spot on which the great contest took place seems to be a matter of doubt even now. The ground is Turkish soil,—near to the mountains which separate modern Greece from Turkey and is not well adapted for the researches of historical

travelers. Cæsar had been keeping his men on the march close to Pompey, till Pompey found that he could no longer abstain from fighting. Then came Labienus with his vaunts, and his oath,—and at length the day and the field were chosen. Cæsar at any rate was ready. At this time Cæsar was fifty-two years old, and Pompey was five years his elder.

Cæsar tells us that Pompey had 110 cohorts, or eleven legions. Had the legions been full, Pompey's army would have contained 66,000 legionaries; but Cæsar states their number at 45,000, or something over two-thirds of the full number. He does not forget to tell us once again that among these eleven were the two legions which he had given up in obedience to the demand of the Senate. Pompey himself, with these two very legions, placed himself on the left away from the river; and there also were all his auxiliaries,—not counted with the legionaries,—slingers, archers, and cavalry. Scipio commanded in the centre with the legions he had brought out of Syria. So Cæsar tells us. We learn from other sources that Lentulus commanded Pompey's right wing, lying on the river—and Domitius, whom we remember as trying to hold Marseilles against young Brutus and Trebonius, the left. Cæsar had 80 cohorts, or eight legions, which should have numbered 48,000 men had his legions been full—but, as he tells us, he led but 22,000 legionaries, so that his ranks were deficient by more than a half. As was his custom, he had his tenth legion to the right, away from the river. The ninth, terribly thinned by what had befallen it within the lines at Petra, joined to the eleventh, lay next the river, forming part of Cæsar's left wing. Antony commanded the left wing, Domitius Calvinus, whom Cæsar some-



times calls by one name and sometimes by the other, the centre,—and Sulla the right. Cæsar placed himself to the right, with his tenth legion, opposite to Pompey. As far as we can learn, there was but little in the nature of the ground to aid either of them;—and so the fight began.

There is not much complication, and perhaps no great interest, in the account of the actual battle as it is given by Cæsar. Cæsar makes a speech to his army, which was, as we have already learned, and as he tells us now, the accustomed thing to do. No falser speech was ever made by man, if he spoke the words which he himself reports. He first of all reminds them how they themselves are witnesses that he has done his best to insure peace;—and then he calls to their memory certain mock treaties as to peace; in which, when seeking delay, he had pretended to engage himself and his enemy. He had never wasted, he told them, the blood of his soldiers, nor did he desire to deprive the Republic of either army—"alterutro exercitu"—of Pompey's army or of his own. They were both Roman, and far be it from him to destroy aught belonging to the Republic. We must acknowledge that Cæsar was always chary of Roman life and Roman blood. He would spare it when it could be spared; but he could spill it like water when the spilling of it was necessary to his end. He was very politic; but as for tenderness,—neither he nor any Roman knew what it was.

Then there is a story of one Crastinus, who declares that whether dead or alive he will please Cæsar. He throws the first weapon against the enemy and does please Cæsar. But he has to please by his death, for he is killed in his effort.

Pompey orders that his first rank shall not leave its order to advance, but shall receive the shock of Cæsar's attack. Cæsar points out to us that he is wrong in this, because the very excitement of a first attack gives increased energy and strength to the men. Cæsar's legionaries are told to attack, and they rush over the space intervening between the first ranks to do so. But they are so well trained that they pause and catch their breath before they throw their weapons. Then they throw their pikes and draw their swords, and the ranks of the two armies are close pitted against each other.

But Pompey had thought that he could win the battle, almost without calling on his legionaries for any exertion, by the simple strategic movement of his numerous cavalry and auxiliaries. He outnumbered Cæsar altogether, but in these arms he could overwhelm him with a cloud of horsemen and of archers. But Cæsar also had known of these clouds. He fought now as always with a triple rank of legionaries,—but behind his third rank,—or rather somewhat to their right shoulder,—he had drawn up a choice body of men picked from his third line,—a fourth line as it were,—whose business it was to stand against Pompey's clouds when the attempt should be made by these clouds upon their right flank. Cæsar's small body of cavalry did give way before the Pompeian clouds, and the horsemen and the archers and the slingers swept round upon Cæsar's flank. But they swept round upon destruction. Cæsar gave the word to that fourth line of picked men. "Illi—they," says Cæsar, "ran forward with the greatest rapidity, and with their standards in advance attacked the cavalry of Pompey with such violence that none of them could stand their

decked in luxurious preparation for the  
 al victors. Couches were strewn, and plate  
 t out, and tables prepared, and the tents of these  
 ones were adorned with fresh ivy. The sena-  
 happy ones have but a bad time of it, either  
 hing in their flight, or escaping into the desert  
 ades of the mountains. Cæsar follows up his con-  
 st, and on the day after the battle compels the great  
 y of the fugitives to surrender at discretion. He  
 rounds them on the top of a hill and shuts them  
 t from water, and they do surrender at discretion.  
 With stretched-out hands, prone upon the earth, these  
 ate conquerors, the cream of the Roman power, who  
 ad so lately sworn to conquer ere they slept, weeping,  
 g for mercy. Cæsar, having said a few words to  
 em of his clemency, gave them their lives. He rec-  
 ommends them to the care of his own men, and desires  
 that they may neither be slaughtered nor robbed.

Cæsar says he lost only 200 soldiers in that battle  
 —and among them 30 officers, all brave men. That  
 allant Crastinus was among the 30. Of Pompey's  
 rmy 15,000 had been killed, and 24,000 had surren-  
 ered! 180 standards and 9 eagles were taken and  
 brought to Cæsar. The numbers seem to us to be  
 almost incredible, whether we look at those given to  
 us in regard to the conqueror or the conquered. Cæsar's  
 account, however, of that day's work has hitherto been  
 taken as authoritative, and it is too late now to ques-  
 tion it. After this fashion was the battle of Pharsa-

ground, but being at once driven in panic, the shelter of the highest mountains near them when they were thus removed, all the archers and slingers, desolate and unarmed, without any one to care of them, were killed in heaps." Such is Caesar's account of Pompey's great attack of cavalry which was to win the battle without giving trouble to the legions.

Caesar acknowledges that Pompey's legionaries did their swords bravely and began their share of the fighting well. Then at once he tells us of the failure on the part of the cavalry and of the slaughter of the poor auxiliary slingers, and in the very next sentence gives us to understand that the battle was won. Though Pompey's legions were so much more numerous than those of Caesar, we are told that Caesar's thin line attacked the Pompeian legionaries when they were "defessi"—worn out. The few cohorts of picked men who in such marvelous manner had dispersed Pompey's clouds, following on their success, turned the flank of Pompey's legions and carried the day. That it was all as Caesar says there can be little doubt. That he won the battle there can, we presume, be no doubt. Pompey at once flew to his camp and endeavored to defend it. But such defence was impossible, and Pompey was driven to seek succor in flight. He found a horse and a few companions, and did not stop till he was on the sea-shore. Then he got on board a provision-vessel, and was heard to be followed by those very men

clearly his first duty to pursue Pompey,—whom, should he escape, the outside provinces and distant allies of the Republic would soon supply with another army. “Cæsar thought that Pompey was to be pursued to the neglecting of all other things.” In the mean time Pompey, who seems to have been panic-struck by his misfortune, fled with a few friends down the *Ægean* Sea, picked his young wife up at an island as he went, and made his way to Egypt. The story of his murder by those who had the young King of Egypt in their keeping is well-known and need not detain us. Cæsar tells it very shortly. Pompey sends to young Ptolemy for succor and assistance, trusting to past friendship between himself and the young king’s father. Ptolemy is in the hands of eunuchs, adventurers, and cut-throat soldiers, and has no voice of his own in the matter. But these ruffians think it well to have Pompey out of the way, and therefore they murder him. Achillas, a royal satrap, and Septimius, a Roman soldier, go out to Pompey’s vessel, as messengers from the king, and induce them to come down into their boat. Then, in the very sight of his wife, he is slaughtered, and his head is carried away as proof of the deed. Such was the end of Pompey, for whom no fortune had seemed to be too great, till Cæsar came upon the scene. We are told by the Roman poet, Lucan, who took the battle of Pharsalia as his difficult theme, that Cæsar could bear no superior, and Pompey no equal. The poet probably wished to make the latter the more magnanimous by the comparison. To us, as we examine the character of the two generals, Cæsar seems at least as jealous of power as his son-in-law, and certainly was the more successful of the two in extruding all others from a share in the power which he coveted.

Pompey in the triumvirate admitted his junior to more, as he must have felt it, than equal power: Cæsar in the triumvirate simply made a stepping-stone of the great man who was his elder. Pompey at Thessaly was forced to divide at least the name of his power with Scipio, his last father-in-law: but Cæsar never gave a shred of his mantle to be worn by another soldier.

In speaking, however, of the character of Pompey, and in comparing it] with that of his greater rival, it may probably be said of him that in all his contests, both military and political, he was governed by a love of old Rome, and of the Republic as the greatest national institution which the world had ever known, and by a feeling which we call patriotism, and of which Cæsar was,—perhaps, we may say, too great to be capable. Pompey desired to lead, but to lead the beloved Republic. Cæsar, caring nothing for the things of old, with no reverence for the past, utterly destitute of that tenderness for our former footsteps which makes so many of us cling with passionate fondness to convicted errors, desired to create out of the dust of the Republic,—which fate and his genius allowed him to recast as he would,—something which should be better and truer than the Republic.

The last seven chapters of the third book of this Commentary form a commencement of the record of the Alexandrine war,—which, beyond those seven chapters, Cæsar himself did not write. That he should have written any Commentary amidst the necessary toils of war, and the perhaps more pressing emergencies of his political condition, is one of the greatest marvels of human power. He tells us now, that having delayed but a few days in Asia, he followed



Pompey first to Cyprus and then to Egypt, taking with him as his entire army three thousand two hundred men. "The rest, worn out with wounds, and battles, and toil, and the greatness of the journey, could not follow him." But he directed that legions should be made up for him from the remnants of Pompey's broken army, and, with a godlike trust in the obedience of absent vassals, he went on to Egypt. He tells us that he was kept in Alexandria by Etesian winds. But we know also that Cleopatra came to him at Alexandria, requiring his services in her contest for the crown of Egypt; and knowing at what price she bought them, we doubt the persistent malignity of the Etesian winds. Had Cleopatra been a swarthy Nubian, as some have portrayed her, Cæsar, we think, would have left Alexandria though the Etesian winds had blown in his very teeth. All winds filled Cæsar's sails. Cæsar gets possession of Cleopatra's brother Ptolemy, who, in accordance with their father's will, was to have reigned in conjunction with his sister, and the Alexandrians rise against him in great force. He slays Photinus, the servant of King Ptolemy, has his own ambassador slain, and burns the royal fleet of Egypt,—burning with it, unfortunately, the greater part of the royal library. "These things were the beginning of the Alexandrine war." These are the last words of Cæsar's last Commentary.

## CHAPTER XII.

### CONCLUSION.

HAVING concluded his ten short chapters descriptive of the ten books of the Commentaries written by Cæsar himself, the author of this little volume has finished his intended task,—and as he is specially anxious not to be thought to have made an attempt at writing history, he would not add any concluding words, were it not that three other Commentaries of Cæsar's three other wars were added to Cæsar's Commentaries by other writers. There is the Commentary on the Alexandrine war,—written probably by Hirtius, the author of the last book of the Gallic war; and two Commentaries on the African war and the Spanish war,—written, as the critics seem to think, by one Oppius, a friend whom Cæsar loved and trusted. The Alexandrine war was a war of itself, in which Cæsar was involved by his matchless audacity in following Pompey into Egypt, and perhaps by the sweetness of Cleopatra's charms. And this led also to a war in Asia Minor, the account of which is included with that of his Egyptian campaign. The African war, and that afterwards carried on in Spain with the object of crushing out the sparks of Pompeian revolt against his power, are simply the latter portions of the civil war, and their re-

cords might have been written as chapters added to the Commentary "De Bello Civili."

Alexandria, when Cæsar landed there in pursuit of Pompey and had offered to him as a graceful tribute on his first arrival the head of his murdered rival, was a city almost as populous and quite as rich as Rome; and in the city, and throughout the more fertile parts of Egypt, there was a crowd of Roman soldiers left there to support and to overawe the throne of the Ptolemies. Cæsar, with hardly more than half a full legion to support him, enters Alexandria as though obedience were due to him by all in Egypt as Roman consul. He at once demands an enormous sum of money, which he claims as due to himself personally for services rendered to a former Ptolemy; he takes possession of the person of Ptolemy the young king,—and is taken possession of by Cleopatra, the young king's sister, who was joint heir with her brother to the throne. In all his career there was perhaps nothing more audacious than his conduct in Egypt. The Alexandrians, or rather perhaps the Roman army in Egypt under the leading of the young king's satraps, rise against Cæsar, and he is compelled to fortify himself in the town. He contrives, however, to burn all the Egyptian fleet, and with it unfortunately the royal library, as we were told by himself at the end of the last Commentary. He at length allows Ptolemy to go, giving him back to the Egyptians, and thinking that the young king's presence may serve to allay the enmity of the Alexandrians. The young king wept at leaving Cæsar, and declared that even his own kingdom was not so dear to him as the companionship of Cæsar. But the crafty false-faced boy turns against Cæsar as soon as he is free to do so. Cæsar never was

in greater danger; and as one reads one feels one's self to be deprived of the right to say that no more insane thing was ever done than Cæsar did when he swaggered into Alexandria without an army at his back,—only by the remembrance that Cæsar was Cæsar. First; because he wanted some ready money, and secondly, because Cleopatra was pretty, Cæsar nearly lost the world in Egypt.

But there comes to his help a barbarian ally,—a certain Mithridates of Pergamus, a putative son of the great Mithridates of Pontus. Mithridates brings an army to Cæsar's rescue, and does rescue him. A great battle is fought on the Nile,—a battle which would have been impossible to Cæsar had not Mithridates come to his aid,—and the Egyptians are utterly dispersed. Young Ptolemy is drowned; Cleopatra is settled on her throne; and Egypt becomes subject to Cæsar. Then Cæsar hurries into Asia, finding it necessary to quell the arrogance of a barbarian who had dared to defeat a Roman General. The unfortunate conquerer Pharnaces, the undoubted son of Mithridates of Pontus. But Cæsar comes, and sees, and conquers. He engages Pharnaces at Zela, and destroys his army, and then, we are told, inscribed upon his banners those insolent words—“Veni, vidi, vici.” He had already been made Dictator of the Roman Empire for an entire year, and had reveled with Cleopatra at Alexandria, and was becoming a monarch.

These were the campaigns of the year 47 B. C., and the record of them is made in the Commentary “*De Bello Alexandrino*.”

In the mean time things have not been going altogether smoothly for Cæsar in Italy, although his friends at Rome have made him Dictator. His soldiers have mu-

tinied against their officers, and against his authority; and a great company of Pompeians is collected in that province of Africa in which poor Curio was conquered by Juba,—when Juba had Roman senators walking in his train, and Cæsar's army was destroyed. The province called by the name of Africa lay just opposite to Sicily, and was blessed with that Roman civilization which belonged to the possessions of the Republic which were nearest to Rome, the great centre of all things. It is now the stronghold of the Republican faction,—as being the one spot of Roman ground in which Cæsar had failed of success. Pompey, indeed, is no more, but Pompey's two sons are here,—and Scipio, Pompey's father-in-law, whom Pompey had joined with himself in the command at Pharsalus. Labienus is here, who, since he turned from Cæsar, has been more Pompeian than Pompey himself; and Afranius, to whom Cæsar was so kind in Spain; and Petreius and King Juba,—of whom a joint story has yet to be told; and Varus, who held the province against Curio;—and last of all there is that tower of strength, the great Cato, the most virtuous and impracticable of men, who, in spite of his virtue, is always in the wrong, and of whom the world at large only remembers that he was fond of wine, and that he destroyed himself at Utica.

They are all at Utica,—and to them for the present Utica is Rome. They establish a Senate; and Scipio, who is unworthy of the great name he bears, and is incompetent as a general, is made commander-in-chief, because Cato decides that law and routine so require. Scipio had been consul,—had been joint commander with Pompey,—and his rank is the highest. The same argument had been used when he was joined in that command,—that it was fitting that such power should

be given to him because he was of consular rank. The command of the Republican fleet had been intrusted to Bibulus on the same ground. We never hear of Cæsar so bestowing promotion. He indeed is now and again led away by another fault, trusting men simply because he loves them,—by what we may call favoritism,—as he did when he allowed Curio to lose his army in Africa, and thus occasioned all this subsequent trouble. As we read of Scipio's rank we remember that we have heard of similar cause for ill-judged promotion in later times. The Pompeians, however, collect an enormous army. They have ten Roman legions, and are supported, moreover, by the whole force of King Juba. This army, we are told, is as numerous as that which Pompey commanded at Pharsalus. There is quarreling among them for authority; quarreling as to strategy; jealousy as to the barbarian, with acknowledged inability to act without him;—and the reader feels that it is all in vain. Cæsar comes, having quelled the mutiny of his own old veterans in Italy by a few words. He has gone among them fearing nothing; they demand their discharge—he grants it. They require the rewards which they think to be their due, and he tells them that they shall have their money,—when he has won it with other legions. Then he addresses them not as soldiers, but as “citizens”—“Quirites;” and that they cannot stand; it implies that they are no longer the invincible soldiers of Cæsar. They rally round him; the legions are re-formed, and he lands in Africa with a small army indeed,—at first with little more than three thousand men,—and is again nearly destroyed in the very first battle. But after a few months campaigning the old story has to be told again. A great battle is fought at Thapsus, a year and five



months after that of Pharsalia, and the Republic is routed again and forever. The commentator tells us that on this occasion the verocity of Cæsar's veterans was so great, that by no entreaties, by no commands, could they be induced to cease from the spilling of blood.

But of the destruction of the leaders separate stories are told us. Of Cato is the first story, and that best known to history. He finds himself obliged to surrender the town of Utica to Cæsar; and then, "he himself having carefully settled his own affairs, and having commended his children to Lucius Cæsar, who was then acting with him as his quæstor, with his usual gait and countenance, so as to cause no suspicion, he took his sword with him into his bedroom when it was his time to retire to rest,—and so killed himself." Scipio also killed himself. Afranius was killed by Cæsar's soldiers. Labienus, and the two sons of Pompey, and Varus, escaped into Spain. Then comes the story of King Juba and Petreius. Juba had collected his wives and children, and all his wealth of gold and jewels and rich apparel, into a town of his called Zama; and there he had built a vast funeral-pile, on which, in the event of his being conquered by Cæsar, he intended to perish,—meaning that his wives and children and dependants and rich treasure should all be burned with him. So, when he was defeated, he returned to Zama; but his wives and children and dependants, being less magnificently minded than their king, and knowing his royal purpose, and being unwilling to become ornaments to his euthanasia, would not let him enter the place. Then he went to his old Roman friend Peterius, and they two sat down together to supper. Petreius was he who would not allow Afranius to surrender to Cæsar at Lerida. When they

have supped, Juba proposes that they shall fight each other, so that one at least may die gloriously. They do fight, and Petreius is quickly killed. "Juba being the stronger, easily destroyed the weaker Petreius with his sword." Then the barbarian tried to kill himself; but, failing, got a slave to finish the work. The battle of Thapsus was fought, B.C. 47. Numidia is made a province by Cæsar, and so Africa is won. We may say that the Roman Republic died with Cato at Utica.

The Spanish war, which afforded matter for the last Commentary, is a mere stamping out of the embers. Cæsar, after the affair in Africa, goes to Rome; and the historian begins his chronicle by telling us that he is detained there "*muneribus dandis*,"—by the distribution of rewards,—keeping his promise, no doubt, to those veterans whom he won back to their military obedience by calling them "*Quirites*," or Roman citizens.\* The sons of Pompey, Cnæus and Sextus, have collected together a great number of men to support their worn-out cause, and we are told that in the battle of Munda more than 30,000 men perished. But that was the end of it. Labienus and Varus are killed; and the historian tells us that a funeral was made for them. One Scapula, of whom it is said that he was the promoter of all this Spanish rebellion, eats his supper, has

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\* Not in the Commentary, but elsewhere, we learn that he now triumphed four times, for four different victories, taking care to claim none for any victory won over Roman soldiers. On four different days he was carried through the city with his legions and his spoils and his captives. His first triumph was for the Gallic wars; and on that day Vercingetorix, the gallant Gaul whom we remember, and who had now been six years in prison, was strangled to do Cæsar honor. I think we hate Cæsar the more for his cruelty to those who were not Romans, because policy induced him to spare his countrymen.

himself anointed, and is killed on his funeral-pile. Cnæus, the elder son of Pompey, escapes wounded, but at last is caught in a cave, and is killed. Sextus, the younger, escapes, and becomes a leading rebel for some years longer, till at last he also is killed by one of Antony's officers.

This Commentary is ended, or rather is brought to an untimely close, in the middle of a speech which Cæsar makes to the inhabitants of Hipsala,—Seville,—in which he tells them in strong language how well he behaves to them, and how very badly they have behaved to him. But we reach an abrupt termination in the middle of a sentence.

After the battle of Munda Cæsar returned to Rome, and enjoyed one year of magnificent splendor and regal power in Rome. He is made Consul for ten years, and Dictator for life. He is still high priest, and at last is called King. He makes many laws, and perhaps adds the crowning jewel to his imperishable diadem of glory by reforming the calendar, and establishing a proper rotation of months and days, so as to comprise a properly-divided year. But as there is no Commentary of this year of Cæsar's life, our readers will not expect that we should treat of it here. How he was struck to death by Brutus, Cassius, and the other conspirators, and fell at the foot of Pompey's statue, gathering his garments around him gracefully, with a policy that was glorious and persistent to the last, is known to all men and women.

“Then burst his mighty heart;  
And in his mantle muffling up his face,  
Even at the base of Pompey's statue,  
Which all the while ran blood, Great Cæsar fell.”

That he had done his work, and that he died in time to save his name and fame from the evil deeds of which unlimited power in the State would too probably have caused the tyrant to be guilty, was perhaps not the least fortunate circumstance in a career which for good fortune has been unequaled in history.

THE END.

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# HERODOTUS

BY

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# THE HISTORY OF HERODOTUS.

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## INTRODUCTION.

So little is known for certain regarding the life of Herodotus, "the father of history," that it may well be a subject of congratulation that he has not shared the fate of Homer, the father of poetry, in having doubt thrown on his individual existence.

He appears to have been born about the year 484 before Christ, between the two great Persian invasions of Greece, at Halicarnassus, a colony of Dorian Greeks on the coast of Asia Minor. His family was one of some distinction. From his writings alone we should know that he received a liberal education, and became familiarly acquainted with the current literature of his day; and the epic form of his great prose work, besides numberless expressions and allusions, bears witness to the fact that the Homeric poems were his constant study and model.

His early manhood was spent in extensive travels, in which he accumulated the miscellaneous materials of his narrative. He visited, in the course of them, a great part of the then known world; from Babylon and Susa in the east, to the coast of Italy in the west; and from the mouths of the Dnieper and the Danube in the north, to the cataracts of Upper Egypt southwards. Thus his travels covered a distance of

thirty-one degrees of longitude from east to west, and twenty-four of latitude from north to south—an area of something like 1700 miles square. It was an immense range in days when there were few facilities for locomotion, and when every country was supposed to be at war with its neighbors, unless bound by express treaties of peace and alliance. He travelled, too, it must be remembered, in an age when robbers by land and sea were members of a recognized profession,—very lucrative and not entirely disreputable: when (as we shall see hereafter) disappointed political or military adventurers took to piracy as a last resort, without any sort of compunction. “Pray, friends, are you pirates,—or what?” is the question which old Nestor puts to his visitors, in the “*Odyssey*,” without the least intention either of jesting or of giving offence. A voyage itself was such a perilous matter, that a Greek seaman never, if he could help it, lost sight of land in the daytime, or remained on board his ship during the night; and at a late date the philosopher Aristotle distinctly admits that even his ideal “brave” man may, without prejudice to his character, fear the being drowned at sea. The range of our author’s travels is, however, less wonderful than their busy minuteness. He is traveller, archæologist, natural philosopher, and historian combined in one. He appears scarcely ever to have concluded his visit to a country without exhausting every available source of information. Personal inquiry alone seems to have satisfied him, wherever it could be made; though he consulted carefully all written materials within his reach, records public and private, sacred and secular. He rightly calls his work a “history,” for the Greek word “history” means really “investigation,” though it has passed into a different use with us. In Egypt

alone he seems to have spent many years, visiting and exploring its most remarkable cities—Memphis, Hieropolis, and the “hundred-gated” Thebes. In Greece proper, as well as its colonies on the Asiatic seaboard and in South Italy, and in all the islands of the Archipelago, he is everywhere at home, as well as in the remoter regions of Asia Minor.

Such details of his life as have come down to us rest on somewhat doubtful authority. It is said that he was driven from Halicarnassus to Samos by the tyranny of Lygdamis, grandson of that Queen Artemisia whose conduct he nevertheless, with some generosity, immortalizes in his account of the battle of Salamis; that in Samos he learned the Ionic dialect in which his history is written; that in time he returned to head a successful insurrection against Lygdamis, but then, finding himself unpopular, joined in the Athenian colonization of Thurium, in Italy, where he died and was buried, and where his tomb in the market-place was long shown. His residence at Samos may have been a fiction invented to explain the dialect in which he wrote, which was more probably that consecrated by usage to historical composition. At one time he appears to have removed to Athens, where he received great honors, partly in the substantial shape of ten talents (more than £2400), after a public recitation of his history. According to one story, he was commissioned to read it before the assembly of all the Greek States on the occasion of the great national games held every fourth year at Olympia in Elis.

Amongst the audience on some such occasion, most probably at Athens, a young Athenian, Thucydides, is said to have been present; and the introduction which then took place may have given the first stim-

ulus to the future historian of the Peloponnesian war, who, despairing of surpassing his predecessor as a charming story-teller, boldly struck out for himself a new path, as the founder of the critical method. It seems also that at Athens Herodotus enjoyed the friendship of the great tragic poet Sophocles. Plutarch has preserved the opening words of a poem in which the tragedian compliments the historian, after he had quitted Athens for Thurium. In two of the tragedies of Sophocles, the "*Œdipus at Colonus*" and the "*Antigone*," are passages plainly adapted from this history. The society of Athens under Pericles, comprising all that was most select and brilliant in art and intellect, must have had great attractions for Herodotus; and it implies some self-denial on his part to have torn himself away from it. Probably he longed to exercise, as most Greeks did, full political rights, which, as an alien, he could not enjoy at Athens, though he was evidently an enthusiastic admirer of her institutions.

After his emigration to Thurium, he seems to have devoted his life to the elaboration and amplification of his great work. Several passages in his history prove that he was, at all events, acquainted with the earlier events of the great Peloponnesian war. The balance of evidence seems to point to his death having occurred when he was about sixty. If so, he at least escaped witnessing, as the result of that war, the fall of his beloved Athens from her well-won supremacy over Greece.

The history of Herodotus is a great prose epic, suggested doubtless to the author in early life by the fame of those events which were still fresh in the minds of all men—the repulse of the Persian invasion, and the liberation of Greece. The Greeks had thrown off col-



onies, from time to time, into the islands of the Levant and the west coast of Asia.\* These Asiatic Greeks had actually been enslaved by Persia; and European Greece, though free from the first, could only wake to the full consciousness of that freedom when the overshadowing dread of the monster Asiatic power had been dissipated. Independence could be but a name for either Athenian or Spartan so long as the very sight of the Persian dress (as Herodotus tells us) inspired terror. Until Miltiades won Marathon, by a rush as apparently desperate as our Balaklava charge, the Persians had been reputed invincible. Their second expedition against Greece was intended to repair the damaged prestige of Persian valor, by setting in motion overwhelming numbers. It seemed as if the dead weight alone of Asiatic fleets and armies must carry all before it. It did indeed carry Athens, but not the Athenians. The sea-fight of Salamis was won by citizens who had lost their city. The two great victories which followed within a year—Platæa and Mycale, gained on the same day—indicated for ever the superiority of Europeans over Asiatics. The latter was fought out on Asiatic ground—the beginning of the great retribution which has continued even to the present time, represented by uncertain tides of Western conquest gradually gaining ground on the East.

Never before or since has an author employed himself with grander subject matter than Herodotus. The victories of Freedom in all ages, more than any other conquests, have stirred the human heart to its depths.

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\* Of these colonies, some were Ionian, some Dorian, and some Æolian, having been originally founded by each of these old Greek races. But Herodotus usually speaks of them all as "Ionians," as these took the most active share in the war.

It is the cause that alone humanizes war, and makes it other than brutal butchery. Many such victories there have been in the course of time, but all of local and limited importance in comparison. And, indeed, perhaps Marathon made Morgarten possible. By Salamis and Plataea the world may have escaped being orientalized for ever, and bound in the immobility of China. These battles, by saving freedom and securing progress, anticipated the overthrow of the Saracens before Tours, and of the Turks before Vienna. Herodotus, indeed, could not see all this, when the plan of his great history dawned on his mind, but the salvation of his beloved Greece was to him a sufficient inspiration.

We find the same unity of design in the history of Herodotus as in Homer's great epic. As in the "*Iliad*," not the siege of Troy but the wrath of Achilles is the continual burden, so, in our author's work, not the history of Greece but the destruction of the great Persian armada is its one great subject. All the other local histories, though introduced with much fullness of detail, are subordinate to this consummation. They flow to it like the tributaries of a river, whose might and grandeur make men love to explore its sources. He gives us in succession the early history of Lydia, of Babylon, and of Assyria, in order to trace the rise and fall of those several Asiatic powers which merged at last in the great empire of the Medes and Persians, who are the actors in his true drama, to which these preliminary histories are a discursive prologue. His work is not a romance founded on fact, like Xenophon's "*Education of Cyrus*," or Shakspeare's historical plays, or Scott's "*Quentin Durward*." It is serious history, as history was understood in his time. But the historian's appetite was omnivorous in the collection of materials, and robustly

digested fable and fact alike. His mind was like that of Froissart and Philip de Comines, who lived in another age, when miracles were thought matters of course. Yet in Herodotus we perceive the dawning of that criticism which finds its full expression in Thucydides, who was in mind a modern historian, though less fastidious as to the evidence of facts than a man of our century would be. The incredulity of Herodotus, when it shows itself, seems rather evoked by the suspected veracity of his informant, or some contradiction in phenomena, than by the incredible nature of the facts themselves.

He has been most found fault with for ascribing effects to inadequate causes; but we ought rather to feel grateful to him, considering the mould in which the mind of his time was cast, for endeavoring to trace the connection between cause and effect at all. In Homer the gods are always in requisition, and always at hand to manage matters, even in minutest details. That Herodotus had a religious mind there can be no doubt, for he speaks even of foreign and barbaric rites and beliefs with intense respect. And the great Liberation War of Greece was, in its circumstances, calculated to illustrate one great pervading principle of his religion—that heaven will not allow an excess of mortal prosperity. The rock which overhung the bay of Salamis, whence Xerxes looked down on his host, might well bear the statue of Nemesis. Nemesis, in the religious system of the ancient Greeks, is the great divine stewardess, who assigns to man his quota of good or of evil. If man takes to himself more good than his share, she adjusts the balance by giving him evil; for the gods are jealous of those who try to vie with them. Did not Apollo flay Marsyas for daring to contend with him on

the lyre? Did not Minerva change Arachne into a spider for boasting to be a better spinster than herself? So the Sovereign of the gods cannot endure the luxury and pride of the earthly despot. It becomes the business of Nemesis to compass his destruction. She invokes against him Até, or Infatuation. Até blindfolds his mind, and forces him to enter of his own will on the path whose end is destruction. To ward off this, men resort to sacrifice; but any sacrifice short of what is most precious is useless. Polycrates, the despot of Samos, almost insults the gods in supposing that throwing a jewel into the sea will atone for the crime of prosperous sovereignty; the ring comes back to him in a fish brought to his table. Was not Agamemnon compelled to sacrifice his daughter, the pride of his house, before he could obtain a fair wind to sail to Troy? It seems to have been an article of the Athenian's creed, which Herodotus shared, that there was a sort of wickedness in one free man attempting to rise above the level of his fellow-citizens: and perhaps they thought that their honorable punishment of ostracism was devised as much for a great man's good as for theirs.\* It was a kind of inverted doctrine of the divine right of kings, traces of which we find throughout the Attic literature. Had Herodotus lived in our day, we may im-

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\* Ostracism was so called from the oyster-shells on which Athenian citizens wrote their names in voting. Any man of more than average greatness or goodness was liable to incur this left-handed compliment, which consisted in his being requested to go abroad for a term of years, in case a sufficient number of votes was given. It was instituted as a security to democracy, and as preventive of *coups d'état*. It was discredited at last by its application to the case of a vulgar demagogue. The Syracusans had a similar institution called "Petallism," from the leaves of olive on which the names were written.

agine that his attention would have been powerfully arrested by the fate of Napoleon the First, or the Czar Nicholas of Russia, as illustrating this sentiment.

Frequent references will be found in these pages to Mr. Rawlinson's "*History of Herodotus*;" but it is desired here to acknowledge more distinctly the use which has been made of his exhaustive volumes.

The history of Herodotus was divided by the ancients into nine books, each bearing the name of one of the Muses. His own order of narration is very discursive, for he digresses into local history and anecdote continually. In these pages a rearrangement into chapters will perhaps be more welcome to the general reader.

---

## CHAPTER I.

### CRÆSUS.

"And ever, against eating cares,  
Lap me in soft Lydian airs."

—MILTON, "*L'Allegro*."

IN the great quarrel between Europe and Asia, which is the end and scope of our author's work, it is of the utmost consequence to the satisfaction of his religious principles that the balance of blame should incline to the side of the true offenders. According to the showing of the Persians themselves, who had their story-tellers, if not historians, the Asiatics were the first offenders. A Phœnician skipper went to Argos, and carried off Io, the king's daughter, to Egypt, whither he was bound. By way of reprisals, the Greeks then

carried off two women for one—Europa from Tyre, and Meda from Colchis. This may have partly excused Alexander or Paris, son of Priam king of Troy, for carrying off Helen, the wife of Menelaus, from Sparta, in the second generation afterwards. But then, said the Persians, the Greeks put themselves clearly in the wrong—for instead of carrying off another lady, they made the abduction of Helen a case of war. “To carry off women was manifestly the deed of unjust men, but to make so serious matter of their abduction was the part of simpletons, since they hardly could have been carried off without their own consent.” Indeed, according to one account, Io at least eloped of her own free will. But in fact, our historian thinks, from the time of the Trojan war the Asiatics looked upon the Greeks as their natural enemies.

Without discussing too curiously all these tales, Herodotus has no doubt in his own mind that the blame ought to lie with the Asiatics, since Cræsus, king of Lydia, was the first historical aggressor. Before his time all the Greeks were free, and he was the first Asiatic potentate who, by fair means or foul, reduced Grecian states to various kinds of dependency. The towns on the coast he subdued by force, easily enough. He had proposed to try the same means with the islanders of the Archipelago, when he was dissuaded from his purpose by a shrewd jest. Among other travelers who visited his court was one of the Seven Wise Men of Greece—Bias of Priene. The king asked him, as he did all his visitors, what was the last news? “The islanders,” said Bias, “are busy raising a force of cavalry with which they mean to invade Lydia.” Cræsus declared it was the very thing he could wish,—but he hardly believed they could be so



utterly foolish. Bias ventured to think that the Greek islanders would be equally amused to hear that the Lydians intended to attack them on their own element. The king took the hint; and it is the earliest specimen we have of the wisdom which afterwards so often clothed itself in the language of the "Court Fool."

The Lydians appear to have been a people, like the Egyptians, of nearly immemorial civilization, and, like the Asiatic tribes who fought for the Trojans, to have had a common origin with the Greeks themselves, and to have differed little from them in manners and customs. There is manifest truth in the tradition which connected them with the Etruscans and the Pelasgians; and their three dynasties, of the second of which Hercules was said to be founder, may have represented three cognate races of conquerors, like the Saxons, Danes, and Normans with us. They appear to have been at first a warlike people, but to have been enervated by conquest, and then, like the descendants of the ancient Italians, to have become chiefly famous as artists, especially as musicians.

This Cræsus, the son of Alyattes, in time extended his empire over most of the countries westward of the river Halys. He was in some sort, the Solomon of his age; fabulously rich, magnificent in his expenditure, and of unbounded hospitality; so that great men came to visit him from all parts, and to gaze on the splendors of his court. Amongst them was Solon the Athenian. Solon had remodeled the laws of Athens, with the concurrence of the Athenian people; but knowing the fickleness of his countrymen, had gone into voluntary exile for ten years, having bound them by oath that they would make no change in their institutions in

his absence. Cræsus, in the course of his conversations with Solon, wished to extract from him the confession that he considered him the happiest of mankind. Solon refused to account any man happy till death had set its seal on his felicity, and took occasion to warn Cræsus of the instability of all human affairs, dilating especially on the jealous nature of the gods. The king could not brook the plain-speaking of his guest, and dismissed him in disfavor. He was soon to prove the truth of his warning: the terrible Nemesis, says our author, was awakened—probably, he thinks, by this very boast of thinking himself the happiest of mortals. Then he goes on to tell in his own delightful fashion—

#### THE STORY OF ADRASTUS.

Cræsus had two sons—the one grievously afflicted, for he was deaf and dumb, but the other by far the first of the youths of his age, by name Atys. Now Cræsus dreamed that he should lose this Atys by the stroke of an iron weapon. Through fear of this dream he took him no longer with him to the wars; but sought out for him a wife who might keep him at home. Nay, he even had all the weapons that hung in the men's rooms stacked away in the inner chambers, lest any of them might fall on him by accident. While the marriage was preparing, there came to seek refuge at Sardis a Phrygian of royal birth who had committed homicide. Cræsus purified him with the due rites, and then inquired his name. He said, "I am Adrastus, son of Gordias; I slew my brother by misadventure, and my father has turned me out of doors, and I have lost all." And Cræsus answered, "Thou art the son of a friend, and art come to friends; with me thou

shalt lack nothing. Thou wilt do best to bear thy mishap as lightly as thou mayest." About this time it came to pass that a huge wild boar came out of Mount Olympus in Mysia and laid waste the fields; and the people came to Cræsus and besought him to send to them his son to help them with the hunting-train. And Cræsus, mindful of the dream, refused to send his son, but promised to send the train and picked sportsmen of the Lydians. But his son Atys coming in, was much vexed, and said, "Thou bringest me to shame, my father, in the eyes of the citizens and of my bride, in that thou dost forbid me to go to the wars and the chase, as though I were a coward." But Cræsus said, "I hold thee no coward, yet I do wisely, for I was warned by a dream that an iron weapon should slay thee; therefore did I give thee a wife to keep thee at home. For thou art in truth my only son, for the other I count as though he were not, being deaf and dumb." Then answered the son, "It is natural, my father, to take good heed on my behalf, after such a dream. But what iron weapon hath a boar, or what hands to hurl it? If indeed thou hadst dreamed that I should die by a tusk, thou wouldst be wise in doing what thou doest, but not now, for this war is not with men." Cræsus confessed himself persuaded by these words, and allowed his son to join the chase; but he begged Adrastus to go with him and guard him, lest any evil should happen by the way; and Adrastus, though heavy of heart, deemed that he could deny Cræsus nothing in return for his kindness, and went accordingly. So the hunters made a great hunt, and having brought the boar to bay, stood round and threw javelins at him. And it came to pass that Adrastus threw his javelin, and missed the boar, and killed the son of Cræsus. So the dream was fulfilled. Now

Cræsus, when he heard the news, was sorely troubled, and in his anguish called on Jupiter as lord of purification, as lord of the hearth, as lord of companionship, to witness what he suffered at the hands of his suppliant, his guest, and the man whom he had sent to guard his son. And now came the Lydians bearing the corpse, and behind them followed the slayer, Adrastus. And he, standing before the bier and stretching forth his hands, besought Cræsus to take his life as he was no longer worthy to live. Then Cræsus, though in great grief, pitied him and said, "Thou hast made full atonement, in that thou hast judged thyself worthy of death. Thou art not to blame, but as a tool in the hands of some god, who long since did signify to me what should come to pass." So Cræsus buried his son, and spared Adrastus. But when he was departed, Adrastus, as thinking himself of all men the most wretched, slew himself upon the tomb. And Cræsus mourned for his son for the space of two years. But at the end of that time he was fain to bestir himself, for there came to him a rumor that Cyrus the Persian had conquered the Medes, and was exalting himself above all the kings of the earth; and he hastened, if it were possible, to crush the Persian power before it became too strong.

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Cræsus, in Herodotus's story, appears in close relations with the god Apollo. The world-famous shrine of this god was at Delphi on Mount Parnassus, currently believed to be the exact centre of the earth—the earth itself being looked upon as a round disc. In the temple there, the site of which was supposed to be the spot where the serpent Python was slain by the arrows of the Sun-god, there was an oracle, the most renowned in the world. Its answers, in spite of their ambiguity, guided

the public and private affairs of the Greeks to an extent which appears to us now almost ludicrous. Though generally vague and perplexing, yet they were often so much to the point, that some of the old Fathers of the Church attributed them to Satanic influence, as they doubtless would table-turning and spirit-rapping, if they lived now. It was also believed that their efficacy ceased exactly with the coming of our Lord, by which time, at all events, faith in them had worn out. Milton alludes to this tradition in his "Hymn on the Nativity":—

"The oracles are dumb;  
 No voice or hideous hum  
     Runs through the archèd roof in words deceiving.  
 Apollo from his shrine  
 Can no more divine.  
     With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.  
 No nightly trance, or breathèd spell,  
 Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell."

Before he determined on his expedition against Cyrus, Cræsus sent to test the most famous oracles in Greece and that of Jupiter Ammon in Libya, in order that he might know which was most to be trusted. And he made the trial thus: he told his messengers to ask each oracle, on the hundredth day after their departure, what Cræsus was doing at that particular hour. The other answers are unrecorded, but the answer of the priestess of Apollo at Delphi ran thus:—

"Truly the tale of the sand I know, and the measures of ocean—  
 Deftly the dumb I read, I list to the voice of the silent.  
 Savor has reached my sense from afar of a strong-skinned tor-  
     toise  
 Simmering, mixed together with flesh of lamb, in a caldron;  
 Brazen the bed is beneath, and brazen the coverlet over."

Cræsus, when he received this answer, judged the god of Delphi to be the wisest, since he alone could tell exactly what he was doing—for he had been cooking the flesh of a tortoise, mixed with lamb's flesh, in a brass caldron with a brass lid. Accordingly he sent rich presents to the shrine of Apollo, and ordered all his subjects to pay him especial honors. Thus having satisfied himself that this oracle at least was true, he next sent to inquire if he should go to war with the Persians. The answer was, that if he did so "he would ruin a great empire;" at which answer Cræsus rejoiced greatly, for he expected to destroy the empire of the Persians. He sent a third time and inquired of the oracle if his reign would be long? And the oracle answered:—

"When it shall come to pass that the Medes have a mule for monarch,  
Lydian, tender of foot, then along by the pebbles of Hermus  
Flee, and delay not then, nor shame thee to quail as a coward."

Cræsus rejoiced still more when he heard this, for he thought that, as a mule could never reign over men, the rule of himself and his descendants would never come to an end.

His next step, still under the advice of the oracle, was to make friends of the most powerful Greek states. At this point Herodotus, having wound his readers up to the expectation of a catastrophe, like some modern novelists, diverges into one of his favorite episodes, and takes advantage of the fact that Cræsus found the leading Greek states to be the Lacedæmonians and Athenians, to relate a part of their history.

At Athens, Pisistratus, the son of Hippocrates, had now raised himself to absolute power. Athens being



divided between the parties of the Plain and the Coast, he had headed the third, called the party of the Mountain, and by pretending that his enemies had wounded him, managed to be allowed a body-guard, and then seized on the citadel. He had some vicissitudes of fortune before he was firm in the saddle, and on one occasion he returned to Athens in a chariot accompanied by a woman of great beauty and stature, who personated the goddess Athenè (Minerva).\* The success of the imposition is possible, if we remember that the early Greeks believed that the gods sometimes came down visibly among mortals. By whatever devices, however, he gained or secured the sovereignty, he appears to have ruled well and righteously, and to have done much for the civilization and glory of Athens.

The Spartans or Lacedæmonians were now beginning to assert the leadership which they afterwards obtained in the Peloponnese, as a consequence of those laws of Lycurgus, whose sole end and object was to make Sparta a model barrack for a state of soldiers.

With the Spartans Cræsus had no difficulty in concluding an alliance, as the path of friendship had been paved by a previous interchange of gifts and civilities; they had also heard of the Delphic prophecies. He immediately proceeded to commence a campaign against the Persians by marching into Cappadocia. A sensible Lydian made one last effort to dissuade him. "O king," said he, "thou art about to march against men who have trousers of leather, and all the rest of their

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\* If he had also been accompanied by the owl of that goddess, the case would have been very like one which occurred in the remembrance of this generation, when a fugitive prince landed in France with a tame eagle on his shoulder.

dress of leather, and they feed not on what they would like but on what they have; for their land is rough. Nay more, they are unacquainted with wine, being water-drinkers, and they have no figs to eat, nor anything else that is good. If thou conquerest them thou canst get nothing from them, for they have nothing to lose; if thou dost not, thou wilt lose all thine own good things. There will be no thrusting them back when once they have had a taste of what we enjoy; nay, I thank the gods that they do not put it into the mind of the Persians to march against the Lydians."

In undertaking this war, Cræsus was prompted partly by ambition, partly by his desire to punish Cyrus for dethroning Astyages, the king of Media, who was his brother-in-law. Crossing the river Halys,\* the northern boundary, he advanced to the country near Sinope, on the Black Sea—in modern times notorious as the scene of the destruction of the Turkish fleet by the Russians. Here Cyrus marched out to meet him. A battle took place in which both sides claimed the victory. Cræsus, however, thinking his numbers too small for ultimate success, determined to fall back on Sardis, and begin the war again after the winter with larger forces. He sent round to his allies to tell them to join him in four months' time. But his long course of prosperity was drawing to its close. Cyrus had not been so crippled by the battle but that he could march straight to Sardis and so "bring the news of his own arrival." Cræsus, though surprised, led out the Lydians to meet him. They were at this time as good men of war as any in Asia. They fought, like the knights of chivalry, on horseback, with long lances; and the plain before Sar-

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\* Now the Kizil Irmak.

dis was the battle-field of their predilection. But Cyrus invented a device to paralyze this cavalry. Taking advantage of a horse's natural fear of camels, he organized a camel brigade and placed it in his front, with infantry behind it, and his own cavalry in the rear. Though the Lydian knights, like the Austrians at Sempach, dismounted and fought on foot, the battle went against them, and Cræsus soon found himself besieged in his capital. Then he sent messengers to his allies urging them to help him with all speed.

The Spartans, even had they been able to reach Sardis in time, could not set out at once, as they happened just then to have their hands full. They were fighting with the men of Argos about a tract of borderland called Thyrea. Argos had been in the old Homeric times the head of the Peloponnesus, and was always very jealous of Spartan supremacy. The plausible plan had been adopted of fighting out this particular quarrel by three hundred chosen men on each side; though three on each side, as in the affair of the Horatii and Curatii between Rome and Alba, might have answered the purpose quite as well. The combat proved as deadly as that between the rival Highland clans recorded by Scott in his "*Fair Maid of Perth*." Two only of the Argives were left, who ran home with the news of the victory; while a single Spartan, raising himself up from amongst a heap of dead, remained in possession of the field and set up a trophy. So the result was considered indecisive, and the main armies fell to fighting, and the Spartans conquered. Then the Argives shorn their hair, which they formerly wore long, and bound themselves under a curse not to let it grow again till they had recovered Thyrea, and forbade their women to wear gold ornaments—a prohibition probably

more difficult to enforce. The Spartans, in retaliation, made a contrary vow, to let their hair grow, having worn it cropped before. The survivor of their three hundred was said to have slain himself for shame.

In the mean time Cræsus was a lost man. The citadel of Sardis had been scaled by the Persians at a point where a king of old had omitted to carry round a lion, which was to operate as a charm to prevent its being taken. It has been mentioned that Cræsus had a son who was deaf and dumb. His father had tried in vain all means to cure him of his affliction, and given up the attempt in despair. But now, when Sardis was taken, a soldier approached Cræsus, not knowing who he was, to slay him; and Cræsus, in his deep grief, did not care to hinder him, which he might have done by giving his name, since Cyrus had issued express orders to his army that the king of Lydia was to be taken alive. Then suddenly the tongue of the youth was loosed, and when he saw the Persian approaching, he cried out—"Fellow, do not kill Cræsus!" and having made this beginning, he continued able to speak for the rest of his life. Thus Cræsus was taken prisoner, after a reign of fourteen years, and Cyrus, in the cruel spirit of the age, placed him on a pile of wood, with the intention of burning him alive. Then Cræsus bethought him of the wise words of Solon, how no man should be accounted happy until the end, and in his anguish called aloud thrice upon Solon's name. Cyrus asked the meaning of the cry, and when he heard the story was so touched that he ordered the pile, which was already lighted, to be put out. But this could not be done by all their exertions until Cræsus prayed to Apollo for aid, when suddenly a great storm of rain came on and extinguished the fire.

Cyrus treated his royal prisoner with all honor. When the Persian soldiers began to plunder Sardis, Cræsus inquired of his conqueror what they were doing, "Spoiling thy goods, O Cræsus." "Nay, not mine," replied the fallen monarch, "but thine, O Cyrus." Then Cyrus stopped the sack of the city, and in gratitude for the suggestion of Cræsus, begged him to name any favor he could do him. "My lord," said he, "suffer me to send these chains to the god at Delphi, and to ask if this is how he requites his benefactors, and whether ingratitude is an attribute of Greek gods in general?" For Cræsus had loaded the shrine of Apollo with costly presents. The message was sent, and the priestess of the oracle made this reply: "Cræsus atones for his forefather Gyges, who slew Candaules his master. Apollo desired that the judgment should fall on the son of Cræsus and not on himself, but the gods themselves cannot avert fate. The god did what he could, for he deferred the fall of Sardis three years beyond the destined time: secondly, he put out the fire, and prevented Cræsus being burnt alive: thirdly, he did not give a lying oracle, for he only said that Cræsus should destroy a great empire, without saying what empire it should be. Cræsus has no right to interpret his words according to his own wish. As to the oracle about the mule, he might have known that Cyrus was a Persian by his father's side, and a Mede by his mother's, and so a hybrid king." Cræsus was obliged to acquiesce in the explanation, and to take his fate patiently. His ruin was indeed no common bankruptcy. "As rich as Cræsus," soon grew into a vernacular proverb. Yet he was by no means a bad specimen of the millionaire. His gentleness and good-nature were as proverbial as his wealth, and Pindar, the Theban poet, testifies to

to this point—doubtless for substantial reasons of his own:—

“ Of kindly Croesus and his worth  
The name doth never fade.”

The strange vicissitudes of his life became a fertile subject for Greek romancers and moralists. His riches seemed to have been derived partly from the grains of gold brought down in the sand of the river Pactolus, which made Asia Minor the California of antiquity. This was doubtless the origin of the fable of the Phrygian king Midas turning all that he touched to gold. It seems that Sardis in early times was an important place of trade, as Herodotus says that the Lydians were the first coiners of money and the first storekeepers, so far as was known. It was at the same time notorious as the great slave-market of the world.

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## CHAPTER II.

### CYRUS.

“ Not vainly did the early Persian make  
His altar the high places, and the peak  
Of earth-o’ergazing mountains, and thus take  
A fit and unwall’d temple, there to seek  
The Spirit, in whose honor shrines are weak  
Upreared of human hands.”

—BYRON, “Childe Harold.”

Before the Medes and Persians made their appearance in history, the Assyrians, according to Herodotus, had ruled over upper Asia for five hundred and twenty years. Asshur appears in Scripture\* as a son of Shem,

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\* Gen. x. 11, 22.



who went out from the land of Shinar and founded Nineveh. Herodotus is supposed to have written a separate history of Assyria, which has been lost; but Layard and others have deciphered for us a new history from the monuments of that wonderful empire. The bearded kings and warriors, with their wars and lion hunts graven on sandstone slabs, which are to be seen in the British Museum and in the Louvre in Paris, look as fresh as if they had been sculptured yesterday instead of nearly three thousand years ago. The Assyrians were of the Semitic race, of the same family as the Jews and Arabs; while the Medes and Persians were, in Scriptural phrase, of the sons of Japheth—that is, they belonged to the same Aryan, Iranian, or Indo-Germanic family as the Greeks and Romans, and ourselves. The home of the Assyrians and their cognate Babylonians was in the great plain of Mesopotamia, while the Medes lived in the mountains to the east, and the Persians to the south-east. The Median highlanders, being of more hardy habits, first conquered the Assyrian lowlanders, and then, descending to their softer country and habits, were conquered in their turn by the hardier Persians. The decline of Assyria was consummated by the fall of Nineveh, which was taken, about B. C. 625 by Cyaxares, third king of the Medes, in conjunction with the Babylonians. The first king of the Medes is said to have been Deioces, who built the wonderful city called by Herodotus Agbatana,\* and less correctly by later writers Ecbatana, with its seven circular walls, one within the other, with the palace and treasuries in the centre. The first wall had white battlements, the second black, the third scarlet, the fourth blue, the fifth orange. The last

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\* In the Belistun inscription it is Hagmatāna.

two walls had their battlements silvered and gilt. They rose one above another on a conical hill, and were supposed to have had a symbolic meaning, as referring to the sun, moon, and five planets, or the deities presiding over the days of the week. The last king of the Medes was Astyages, the son of Cyaxares. He had given his daughter Mandane in marriage to Cambyses, who was, according to our author's account a poor Persian gentleman, but according to later authorities, a descendant of the first Persian king Achæmenes. Astyages dreamed that he saw a vine spring from the body of his daughter Mandane, which overshadowed the whole of Asia. We know from Scripture how much stress the Chaldeans and the Medes laid on dreams. Fearing that an offspring of Mandane would deprive him of his sovereignty, Astyages ordered the son that was born of her to be destroyed. The courtier Harpagus, who was commissioned to do this, passed on the child to one of the royal herdsmen, that he might expose it to die upon the mountains. But the herdsman's wife, when she saw that it was "a proper child," and plainly of noble birth, adorned for death with gorgeous apparel, took pity on the infant, and as she had just lost one of her own, persuaded her husband to expose the dead child, and save the living one, that she might nurse it. So the future Cyrus lived, while the herdsman's child received a royal funeral. When the boy was ten years old he was playing one day with the children of his village. The game was King and Courtiers. Cyrus was chosen king, and assumed the dignity as if he had been born it, appointing officers, architects, guards, couriers, and an official called the King's Eye,\* (possibly the head of the

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\* This officer is introduced in Aristophanes' comedy of "The

detective police). In carrying out his character, Cyrus ordered one of the children, the son of a Median of high rank, to be flogged for disobedience. The angry child went to the city and complained to his father, who in turn complained to the real king. Astyages ordered the despotic urchin to be brought into his presence. Unabashed, however, the boy justified himself; and this circumstance together with a strong family resemblance, led to his recognition by the grandfather, who came at the truth by examining the herdsman and Harpagus. He now dissembled his wrath, pretended that he was glad the child had been saved, and invited Harpagus to send his son to be the companion of the young prince, and to come himself to dinner. After Harpagus had well feasted, Astyages asked him how he liked his entertainment; he said it was excellent. Upon this, a basket was shown to him containing the head, hands, and feet of his own son, on whose flesh he had been feasting. The father, with the dissimulation natural to the subjects of an Oriental despotism, observed that whatsoever the king did was right in his eyes. It is the very answer which the son of Ethewold is said by William of Malmesbury to have made when King Edgar showed him his father's corpse, slain by him in the royal forest; the English chronicler having evidently borrowed from Herodotus.

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Acharnians." He appears in a mask (as in a modern burlesque) with a single huge eye in the centre. He is brought to Athens by some envoys who have been at the court of Persia. Dicæopolis (an honest farmer, who is present at the reception) is indignant at their waste of time and the public money.

"*Envoy*.—We've brought you here a nobleman—Sham-artabas  
By name, by rank and office the King's Eye.

*Dicæop*.—God send a crow to peck it out, say I!

And yours th' ambassadors' into the bargain."

—FRERE'S Transl.

Astyages now consulted the Magi (a caste of priests of whom we shall hear more hereafter) as to what was to be done. They said that they considered that Cyrus had ceased to be dangerous, since he had been king already in the children's play. So Astyages sent him away into Persia, to his real parents. Meanwhile Harpagus nursed his revenge, till Cyrus was grown to man's estate, and then he felt his time was come. He sent a letter to the noble youth sewn up in the belly of a hare, bidding him put himself at once at the head of the Persians, and revolt from Astyages. This king—surely under some infatuation from heaven, says the historian—forgetting the deadly wrong which he had done Harpagus, sent him to suppress the revolt. He deserted to Cyrus, and the Medes were easily defeated. Thus Cyrus destroyed the great Median empire, and substituted that of the Persians—becoming, after the downfall of Cræsus, master of all Asia. He treated his grandfather Astyages with all honor to the day of his death.

There was a religious as well as a political dissidence between the two nations. They both worshiped the elements and “all the host of heaven,” and planetary deities; but the Persian national creed recognized both a good and an evil principle in nature, constantly at war, whom they called Ormuzd and Ahriman. The Persians, according to Herodotus, eschewed images, temples, and altars, and sacrificed to the elemental deity on the tops of mountains. But he has evidently confused the Median worship with theirs. Their habits much resembled those of the old Germans, as described by Tacitus. They were originally a simple people, and compulsory education with them was limited to teaching their sons “to ride, to draw the bow, and speak the

truth." Next after lying, they counted running in debt most disgraceful, since "he who is in debt must needs lie." Lepers were banished from society, as they were supposed to have sinned against the sun; even white pigeons being put under "taboo" for a similar reason.\* They were very much given to wine;† and discussed every subject of importance twice—first when they were drunk, and again when they were sober. As water was a sacred element, none might defile a river—a sanitary regulation in which we moderns would do well to follow them. The bodies of the dead presented a difficulty. They might not be buried, for the earth was sacred; or thrown into rivers, for water was sacred; or burnt, for fire was sacred. They were therefore exposed to be torn by birds and beasts—a fate of which the Greeks had the greatest horror. The Parsees of India, and the native Australians, dispose of their dead in much the same way. As a compromise, adopted from the Magi, a body might be buried when covered with wax to prevent its contact with the earth.

The Persians, when they had conquered the Medes, soon degenerated from their earlier simplicity, which is celebrated by Xenophon in his romance of the "Education of Cyrus."

When Cyrus, by the defeat of Cræsus, had made himself master of Lydia, the Greek colonists on the

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\* So to this day, in India, all *white* animals are looked upon much in the way in which we ourselves regard albinos—a kind of unhealthy *lusus naturæ*.

† Their successors retain the taste. "It is quite appalling," says Sir H. Rawlinson, "to see the quantity of liquor which some of these toppers habitually consume, and they usually prefer spirits to wine."

Asiatic seaboard sent to him in alarm, and begged to be allowed to be his vassals on the same terms as they had been to Croesus. He answered them by a scornful parable: "There was a certain piper who piped on the sea-shore for the fish to come out, but they came not. Then he took a net and hauled out a great draught of them. The fish, in their agonies, began to caper. But he said, 'Cease to dance now, since ye would not dance when I piped to you.'"\* This answer drove the Ionian Greeks to fortify their towns and send ambassadors to Sparta for assistance. Their envoy, however, disgusted the Spartans by wearing a purple robe and making a long speech—two things which they detested; and they voted not to send the succors, but despatched a fifty-oared ship to watch the proceedings of Cyrus. When this vessel reached the port of Phocæa, a herald was sent on to Sardis to warn Cyrus from the Spartans not to hurt any Greek city on pain of their displeasure. This caused Cyrus to inquire who these Spartans were, and how many in numbers, that they dared to send him such a message. When he was informed he said, "I am not afraid of people who have a place in their city where they meet to cheat each other and forswear themselves" (meaning the agora or market-place); "and if I live, the Spartans shall have troubles enough of their own, without troubling themselves about the Ionians."

Cyrus had other business on his hands at present than to punish the Greeks; he therefore went back to Ecbatana, leaving a strong garrison in Sardis. But while he was on his way he heard that one Pactyas had induced

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\* This Eastern apologue may serve as an illustration of the parable in Matt. xi. 16.



the Sardiens to revolt, and was besieging the garrison in the citadel. Troops were sent to put down the revolt; Pactyas, however, did not wait for their arrival, but fled to Cyme, on which the Persian general demanded his extradition. The men of Cyme sent to ask advice at a neighboring oracle of Apollo, and the answer came that Pactyas was to be given up. Some of the citizens, not satisfied with this answer, thought the envoys must have made a mistake, and sent again to remonstrate with the god, but the answer was repeated; whereupon Aristodicus, the principal envoy, went round the temple and cleared away all the nests of sparrows and other birds that he found there. While he was thus engaged, a voice came from the sanctuary,—“Unholy man, darest thou to tear my suppliants from my temple?” on which Aristodicus, by no means abashed, replied, “O king, thou canst protect thine own suppliants, and yet thou orderest the Cymæans to surrender theirs.” “I do,” answered the god, “that you may the sooner perish; for it was in the naughtiness of your hearts that you came to consult me on such a matter.”\* Eventually they sent Pactyas to Chios for safety; but the Chians gave him up to the Persians, even tearing him from the temple of Minerva; and Atarneus, a district opposite Lesbos, was paid them as the price of blood. But there was a curse on the produce of Atarneus for ever.

The Persians now proceeded to punish the revolted

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\* The remarkable answer attributed here to the oracle may serve to illustrate the permission given to Balaam to go with the messengers of Balak. Even to the heathen mind, there were questions of conscience so clear, that to consult heaven specially in the matter was a mockery. [See the almost parallel case of Glaucus, ch. viii.]

Lydians and Ionians, and Harpagus, the king-maker, who had deposed Astyages, forthwith beleaguered Phœcæa. The inhabitants of this city, however, preferred exile to slavery; taking an oath never to return until a bar of iron, which they sank in the sea, should rise and float, they set sail, and, after a multitude of adventures, found a resting-place on the coast of Italy.

Most of the other towns on the coast were subdued after a gallant resistance, and the islanders gave themselves up. Then Harpagus turned inland against the Carians and Lycians. The Lycians deserve notice as the reputed inventors of crests to helmets, and of heraldic devices. The Carians were early advocates of the rights of women; naming men not after their fathers, as was usual, but after their mothers. The Lycians of Xanthus\* made a desperate resistance. Finding they could not beat the Persians in the field, they made a great pile, on which they burnt their wives and children, and all their valuables, and then sallied out and perished in battle to a man. Their example was imitated by Saguntum in Spain in the second Punic war.

While Harpagus was thus subduing the coast, Cyrus was pursuing his conquests in Upper Asia. He turned his arms against Labynetus, king of Babylon. This renowned city, says our historian, formed a vast square fifty-five miles in circuit. Its double walls were 340 feet high (nearly as high as St. Vincent's rock at Bristol) and 85 feet thick. The measurements seem enormous, yet the great wall of China shows such works to

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\* About thirty years ago the British Museum was enriched by some beautiful marbles brought from Xanthus by an expedition which explored Lycia under the conduct of Sir Charles Fellows.

be possible, when absolute power commands unlimited labor. The city itself was cut in two by the river Euphrates, the quays being fenced by walls with water-gates for communication. One half contained the king's palace, the other the great sacred tower of Belus (Bel or Baal) with its external winding ascent. Babylon was in fact a fortified province rather than a city; it resembled Jeddo in Japan, in being a collection of country houses with small farms and gardens attached. It seems to have been the ideal of what a great city ought to be, especially in days of internal railroads. London, containing its millions, with its thin houses laterally squeezed together, or Paris, with its horizontal piles of flats, and no corresponding spaces, would have excited the horror of the ancients, who in some respects were more civilized than ourselves. Herodotus attributes the great engineering works about Babylon, to prevent the Euphrates from overflowing the country, chiefly to two queens, Semiramis\* and Nitocris, between whom he places an interval of five generations. Of this latter he relates a striking anecdote.

"She built for herself a tomb above the most frequented gateway of the city, exactly over the gates, and engraved on it the following inscription: "If any of the kings of Babylon who come after me shall be in need of money, let him open my tomb and take therefrom as much as he will; but unless he is in need, let him not open it, else will it be worse for him." Now this tomb remained undisturbed until the kingdom fell to Darius. But he thought it absurd that this gateway

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\* This queen appears to have really reigned in conjunction with her husband. She is probably not the great queen known by the same name.

should be made no use of—for it was not used, because one would have had to pass under the dead body as one went out—and that when money was lying there idle, and calling out for some one to take it, he should not lay his hand on it. So he opened the tomb and found no money at all, but only the dead body, and these words written:—"If thou wert not the greediest of men, and shameless in thy greed, thou wouldst not have disturbed the resting-place of the dead."

Although the author notices most of the wonders of Babylon, he makes no mention of the hanging-gardens, which excited the astonishment of later writers. Nebuchadnezzar is said to have constructed them out of affection for a Median wife, that she might not be afflicted with a Swiss longing for her native mountain scenery.\*

Having defeated the Babylonians in battle, Cyrus drove them inside their huge walls. There they laughed at his efforts, having good store of provisions for many years. But their enemy proved himself as good an engineer as any of their queens, historical or fabulous. Taking advantage of reservoirs previously existing, he turned off by a canal the waters of the Euphrates, and the Persians walked into the city dry-shod by the bed of the river, even the water-gates having been left open by incomprehensible carelessness. Those who were in the centre of the city, says Herodotus, were still feasting, dancing, and revelling, after the Persians had entered. It is the night described in the Book of Daniel, when the terrible "handwriting" was seen upon the wall.†

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\* So a great fox-hunter, who could not find it in his heart to leave England, is said to have turned his conservatory into a little Italy for his delicate wife.

† The names of the Eastern kings are so variously given, that

The Babylonians were a luxurious people. Their full dress was a long linen tunic, with a woollen robe over it, and a short white cloak or cape over the shoulder. Though they wore their hair long, they swathed their heads in turbans, and perfumed themselves all over. Each citizen carried his walking-staff, carved at the top with the likeness of some natural object—such as an apple, a rose, a lily, or an eagle—and had also his private signet. Of these seals (which are hollow cylinders) great numbers have been found during the late explorations, and brought to Europe.\*

Herodotus records one of their customs, which, whether in jest or earnest, he declares to be the wisest he ever heard of. This was their wife-auction, by which they managed to find husbands for all their young women. The greatest beauty was put up first, and knocked down to the highest bidder, then the next in the order of comeliness—and so on to the damsel who was equidistant between beauty and plainness, who was given away gratis. Then the least plain was put up, and knocked down to the gallant who would marry her for the smallest consideration,—and so till even the plainest was got rid of to some cynical worthy who decidedly preferred lucre to looks. By transferring to

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it is almost impossible to identify them either in sacred or profane history. The Labynetus of Herodotus is Nabonidus, or Nabonadius, in other writers. The “Belshazzar” whom Daniel calls “king” was probably his son, associated with him in the government. His name appears in inscriptions as Bilshar-uzur. We know from other authorities that Labynetus himself was not in the city at its capture.—See Rawlinson’s *Herodotus*, i. 524, etc.

\* They are commonly of some composition, but occasionally have been found in amethyst, cornelian, agate, etc.—Layard’s *Nineveh and Babylon*, 602, etc.

the scale of the ill-favored the prices paid for the fair, beauty was made to endow ugliness, and the rich man's taste was the poor man's gain. The Babylonian marriage-market might perhaps be advantageously adopted in some modern countries where marriage is still made a commercial matter. It at least possesses the merit of honesty and openness, and tends to a fair distribution of the gifts of fortune.

Another Babylonian custom, of which Herodotus strongly approves, was that of employing no professional physicians, but placing the sick in the gate of the city, that they might get advice respecting the treatment of their diseases from every passer-by, and thus profit by the experience of those who had been afflicted in the same way as themselves. Whatever may be thought of the absence of regular practitioners, the alternative would certainly seem one of the exceptional cases where wisdom is not found in a multitude of counsellors.

Having annexed this great and rich province to his dominions, Cyrus seems to have been intoxicated with success, or, in our author's view, to have filled up the measure of his prosperity, which now began to run over in insolent self-confidence. He made an expedition against the Massagetæ or Greater Goths who lived in the steppes near the Caspian Sea, and were ruled by an Amazonian widow named Tomyris. While encamping against her, Cyrus dreamed that Darius, the son of Hystaspes, a young noble of the royal house of Persia, appeared to him with wings on his shoulders (like some of the Assyrian gods whose figures he must have seen), with one of which he overshadowed Asia and the other Europe. This portended his fall, and the ultimate accession of Darius. At first he gained a par-



tial advantage by the stratagem of leaving a camp stored with wine to be plundered by the water-drinking Massagetæ, and then returning and massacring them in their sleep. This was the shrewd advice of Cræsus the Lydian, whom Cyrus had taken with him on the expedition. Among the prisoners taken was the son of the Massagetan queen. Cyrus released him from his bonds at his own request; but the youth, unable to bear his disgrace, only took advantage of his liberty to kill himself. At length the invaders were forced to a general action—the fiercest, says Herodotus, ever fought between barbarian armies. The Persians were completely defeated, and Cyrus himself was slain, after a reign of twenty-nine years. Queen Tomyris, exasperated by the treacherous slaughter of her army and the death of her son, had threatened to give the blood-thirsty invader his fill of blood; she kept her word by filling a skin with it, and plunging into it his severed head.

Such is the account which Herodotus gives of the death of the great Eastern conqueror, so famous both in sacred and profane history. He confesses that he has only chosen one legend out of many. There is little doubt, however, that he died in battle. But the Persian poets assigned a very different fate to their national hero, Kai Khusru, as his name stands in their language. They will not allow that he died at all. When he grew old, they say, he one day took leave of his attendants on the banks of a pleasant stream, and was seen no more. But, as in the case of Arthur and Barbarossa, and all the great favorites of a nation, they looked forward to his coming again, more powerful and glorious than ever.

These Massagetæ, says our author, resembled the

Scythians, but could fight on foot as well as on horseback, their favorite weapon being, as with the Anglo-Saxons, a battle-axe or bill. They had the peculiar custom of sacrificing their old people, and then feasting on them, and natural death was considered a misfortune. This curious people, whose descendants may be now in northern or western Europe, knew nothing of tillage, and lived on flesh, fish, and milk. Their only deity, known to Herodotus, was the Sun. To him they sacrificed the horse, with the notion that it was right to bestow the swiftest of creatures on the swiftest of gods. The Persians also attached a certain sanctity to some breeds of horses, and the Teutonic conquerors of Britain bore a horse as their cognizance. Some say that Hengist and Horsa were not names of men, but only represented a people using this national symbol. This rude heraldry of our northern ancestors—or conquerors—may still be traced in the “White Horse” cut out on the chalk-hills in more than one place on our Berkshire and Wiltshire downs.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### EGYPT.

“ In the afternoon they came unto a land  
In which it seemed always afternoon.”

—TENNYSON, “Lotos-Eaters.”

OF all the nine books of Herodotus, the second, which bears the name of the Muse “Euterpe,” is incomparably the one of deepest interest to the modern reader, as giving glimpses, such as are found nowhere else but

in Scripture, of the infancy of the human race, and as propounding important scientific problems, which can, if ever, only find their solution in remote futurity. It is, moreover, the portion of his work which is most strongly stamped with the characteristics of the author's personality. It must ever be borne in mind that Herodotus is not a historian in the modern sense of the term. He is the representative writer of a class who stand midway between poetical annalists like Homer and critical historians like Thucydides. They wrote their Iliads in prose, making no sharp distinction between truth and fiction. They did not yet look upon the verification of their facts as a duty, but jotted down all that they heard and saw, an instinctive love of truth alone suggesting occasional scepticism as to very extraordinary marvels, so that the modern reader may just observe the dawning of the critical spirit. Predominantly in his Egypt, Herodotus appears as the traveler and archæologist; nor is he fairly afloat on the current of history until he launches himself into the narrative of the Persian invasions of Greece, of the circumstances of which he had more immediate knowledge—if not as an eye-witness, yet from those who had themselves been eye-witnesses.

Egypt has been in all ages the land of wonders, from the time when its "magicians" found their enchantments fail before the mightier Power which was with Moses, to that when Napoleon told his soldiers that from the top of the Pyramids four thousand years looked down on their struggle with the Mamelukes,—and to our own day, when a French engineer repeats the feat of the old native kings and the Greek Ptolemies, in marrying by a canal the Red Sea to the Mediterranean; an achievement which will make the name of Lesseps

immortal, if the canal can only be kept clear of sand. The civilization of Egypt is older than time—or at least, than its records. Her kings were counted wholesale—not by individuals, but by dynasties, of which there were said to have been thirty-one, exclusive of gods and heroes. She was the mother of the arts to Greece, as Greece has been to us. Her monuments are nearly as vast and as seemingly indestructible as the everlasting hills themselves, and the study of her mere remnants seems to present a field as inexhaustible as that of nature. No wonder that Herodotus willingly lingered in this interesting country. He was no holiday traveler, but one all ears and eyes, not likely to let any fact or object escape him through carelessness or want of curiosity.

The Egyptians were wont to boast that they were the oldest people in the world; but our author says that their king Psammetichus once put this to the proof, and decided against them. Two infants were kept carefully apart from human society, their attendants being forbidden to utter a word before them. Under these circumstances women as nurses were out of the question, and they were suckled by goats. [There was indeed a Greek version of the legend, which said that the children were nursed by women—with their tongues cut out.] One day, when about two years old, they came to their keeper, stretching out their hands, and calling “Bekkos! bekkos!” This being Phrygian for “bread,” the palm of antiquity was adjudged to the Phrygians. The test was scarcely trustworthy, for probably enough the cry was only an imitation of the bleat of the goats. It has indeed been claimed by etymologists as the Sanscrit root “*pac*,” whence our word “cook” is said to

be derived. The Germans, again, recognize in it their own "bakken" = bake.\*

According to the priests, who were Herodotus's chief informants, the whole country except the district of Thebes, seven days' sail up the Nile from the sea, was originally a swamp. To the truth of this our author was ready to testify, as the whole Delta (called so from the shape of the Greek letter Δ, our D) appeared to him to be "the gift of the river." This formation certainly required time, but he considered that the Nile was so energetic, that in ten thousand years (which is, after all, a very moderate geological period) it might even deposit alluvial soil enough to fill up the Arabian gulf of the Red Sea. The priests appear to have given him very good data for supplementing his own observations on the physical phenomena of the country; and in these details he evinces a patient investigation of facts which would do credit to any age, however scientific. He only becomes fanciful when he begins to speculate on the unknown. With respect to the causes of the annual inundations of the Nile, he could, naturally enough, get no trustworthy information. It struck him as particularly strange that the Nile, unlike other rivers, should begin to rise with the summer solstice, and be in a state of flood for a hundred days afterwards. Certain Greeks who affected a reputation for science endeavored to account for the phenomenon in three ways. The third, which appeared to Herodotus the least plausible explanation, was, that the Nile was swollen by melting snows, though it flows through the torrid land of the Ethiopians into Egypt—which seemed to him a contradiction. Yet

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\* Englishmen have suggested that it may have been a feeble attempt to call for "breakfast."

this theory was so near the actual truth, that the inundations are caused by the summer rains in the highlands of Abyssinia and on the equatorial table-land of Africa. That Herodotus had seen an inundation of the river is tolerably certain, from his description of the appearance of the country at such times. He speaks of the towns and villages standing out of the water "like the islands in the *Ægean Sea*;" a graphic picture, of which modern travelers have recognized the truth. Adopting neither of the theories which had been advanced, Herodotus modestly propounds one of his own, which is curious, but of no scientific value, as resting on false cosmographical data.

As to the sources of the Nile, he says that he never met with but one person who professed to know anything about them. This was the registrar of the treasury of Minerva at Saïs; but when he began to talk about two conical hills—"called Krophi and Mophi"—between Syene and Elephantinè (below the cataracts), Herodotus thought he could hardly be quite serious. Between those hills, said his informant, lay the fountains of the Nile, of unfathomable depth. Half the water ran to Egypt, the other half to Ethiopia. Psammetichus had tried to sound them with a rope many thousand fathoms in length, but there were such strong eddies in the water that the bottom of the spring could never be reached. Herodotus himself went up the Nile as far as Elephantinè—that is, did not get beyond the first cataract; and though he learnt much by inquiry as to the country generally, he could throw no additional light on the great question. But a story reached him originally derived from certain Nasamonians—a people inhabiting the edge of the desert—that once on a time certain "wild young men," sons of their chiefs, took it



into their heads to draw lots which of them should go and explore the desert of Libya, and try to get farther than any one had gone before. Five of their number set out, well supplied with food and water, and passed first through the inhabited region, then through a country tenanted only by wild beasts, and then entered the desert, taking a direction from east to west. After proceeding for many days over a sandy waste, they came at last to a plain where they found fruit-trees, and began to pluck the fruit. While they were doing so, certain very small men came upon them and took them prisoners. The Nasamonians could not understand them, nor make themselves understood. They were led by them across vast marshes, and at last came to a town where all the inhabitants were black dwarfs like their captors. A great river flowed by the town from west to east, abounding in crocodiles. And all the people in the town were wizards. It was added that the explorers returned in safety from their perilous journey. If the Bushmen now surviving at the Cape, and formerly more extensively spread over Africa, were a black race, which they are not, we might suppose them to be the descendants of the little men spoken of by Herodotus. Their color may, however, have been modified by the temperate climate of South Africa in the course of long ages. The tribe of Dokos, in the south-west of Abyssinia, are dwarfish, and answer very nearly to Herodotus's description. Herodotus was inclined to identify the Nile with the river flowing by the mysterious city.\*

It is strange that the oldest geographical problem in the world should be a problem still, though now prob-

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\* It was more probably, as Mr. Rawlinson and Mr. Blakesley both think, the Niger, and the city may have been Timbuctoo.

ably in the course of solution. The nearest approach to the truth appears to have been made by the Alexandrian geographer, Ptolemy, who had heard of certain lakes as the sources of the Nile, and placed them some ten degrees south of the equator. The question slumbered through the middle ages, and one affluent after another was looked upon as the true Nile, till Bruce was for some time supposed to have set the question at rest in the eighteenth century by the discovery of the source of the Blue River. Quite of late years it was agreed again that the White River was the main branch; and in 1857 Captain Speke, setting out from Zanzibar, discovered the Victoria Lake, which is now the farthest authenticated source in an easterly direction, while Sir Samuel Baker's Albert Lake is the farthest authenticated source in a westerly. Up to this time Speke and his companion Major Grant are the only men who have actually crossed Africa from south-east to north, and as yet the honors of discovery must be supposed to rest with them.

In treating of the wonders of Egypt, Herodotus certainly exaggerates on some points from love of paradox, as when he says that as the Nile differs from all other rivers in its nature, so the Egyptians differ from all other men in their habits, the men doing what is usually considered as women's work, and the women men's work; for in this he is refuted by the Egyptian paintings, which represent each sex as usually engaged in its proper occupation. But a Greek must have been much struck with the comparative freedom of the Egyptian women, so unlike the life of the Hellenic "lady's bower," or the Asiatic harem. Sophocles, in his "*Œdipus at Colonus*," has made a beautiful application of this recorded contrast to the helpful piety of the daughters

and the selfish luxury of the sons of the blind hero, which would seem to show that he wrote the play fresh from the perusal of his friend's Egypt.

Our author makes the observation that the Egyptians were the first nation who, holding the soul to be immortal, asserted its migration after death through the whole round of created beings, till it lived again in another man, which occupied a cycle of three thousand years. This doctrine of a "circle of necessity" was held alike by Buddhists, Druids, and—if Josephus may be trusted—by the sect of the Pharisees among the Jews. But this Egyptian doctrine, which is profusely illustrated on the tombs, suffered the wicked only to descend into animals, while the good passed at once into a state of happiness. A striking custom which Herodotus describes would seem to show that to them, as to the Greeks, the future existence was not a cheering prospect.

In the social banquets of the rich, as soon as the feast is ended, a man carries round a wooden figure of a corpse in its coffin, graven and painted so as to resemble the reality as nearly as possible, from one to two cubits long. And as he shows it to each of the guests, he says, "Look on this, and drink, and be merry; for when thou art dead, such shalt thou be."

The "skeleton at the banquet" has pointed many a moral for ancient and modern writers. St. Paul may have had it in mind when he quoted as the motto of the Sadducee, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," as well as Shakspeare, when he makes his Hamlet moralize over Yorick's skull—"Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favor she must come."

Herodotus considers that the names of the gods came

to Greece from Egypt, with the exception of Poseidon (Neptune), Castor and Pollux, Here (Juno), Hestia, Themis, the Graces and the Nereids. All these the Greeks were said to have inherited from the Pelasgians, with the exception of the sea-god Poseidon, with whom they became acquainted through the Libyans. The Egyptians, unlike the Greeks, paid no honor to heroes or demigods; for their god Osiris (who corresponded to Bacchus) appeared on earth only as a manifestation or Avatar of Deity. Among the mythological marvels of the Egyptians Herodotus relates that they accounted cows as sacred to Isis, the moon-goddess, represented with horns, and objected to kill them as food—a practice which finds it parallel in India at the present day. The sacredness of animals generally, in Egypt, struck our traveller forcibly. For each species there were certain appointed guardians, who tended and fed them, and the office was hereditary. To kill one of these sacred animals was a capital offence, unless done accidentally, in which case a fine was inflicted; but to kill an ibis or a hawk was death without reprieve. Cats were so much respected that, in case of a fire occurring, the Egyptians would let the house be burnt before their eyes, all their attention being given to saving the cats; which, however, they usually found impossible, as the animals (no doubt in terror at the well-meant efforts of their friends) had a trick of jumping into the flames. If they died, nevertheless, it was thought to be a terrible misfortune. When a cat died a natural death, all the inmates of a house went into mourning by shaving their eyebrows, and they shaved their heads and their whole bodies when a dog died. The dead cats were embalmed, and their mummies stored in the sacred city of Bubastis; but the dogs were buried in their own cit-

ies, as were also the ichneumons. The hawks and shrew-mice were conveyed to Buto, and the ibises to Hermopolis. It would seem by this that the animals about whose funerals so much trouble was taken were more sacred than the rest.\* The crocodile, of which Herodotus gives a description, perhaps as fairly accurate as could be expected from an ordinary observer, was accounted sacred by some of the Egyptians; for instance, by the people about Thebes, and those about Lake Mœris. In each of these places a tame crocodile was kept, who wore ear-rings (or rather rings in the corresponding holes) of glass or gold, and bracelets on his fore-paws. Every day he had his ration of bread and meat, and when he died he was buried in a consecrated vault. But the people of Elephantinè, so far from canonizing these animals, thought them tolerable eating.

Herodotus gives a native receipt for catching crocodiles. Bait a hook with a chine of pork, and let it float to about the middle of the stream. Let a confederate hold a living pig on the bank, and belabor him lustily. The crocodile hears the pig squeak, and, making for him, encounters the pork, which he swallows. When the men on shore have drawn him to land, plug his eyes with mud; after that, it is very easy to kill him. This latter item of the receipt has a strong affinity to an old precept about "putting salt on a bird's tail." A very similar mode of capture (with this exception) is practiced by the natives now. The name "crocodiles," as the author observes, is Ionic Greek for "lizard;" the

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\* Lane says that the modern Egyptians are remarkably kind to animals. On one occasion a lady buried a favorite dog with all the honors due to a good Mussulman, and houseless cats are fed at the expense of the Cadi of the district.

Egyptians themselves calling the animal "champsä." \* He is somewhat mistaken in his account of the hippopotamus, no specimen of which he appears to have seen. He gives it the hoof of an ox, and the mane and neigh of a horse.

The sacred bird called the phoenix Herodotus confesses he never saw except in pictures. Indeed it was rare in Egypt, for it came but once in five hundred years, when the old phoenix died. According to the pictures, it was like an eagle, with plumage partly red and partly golden. The bird was said to come from Arabia, bringing the body of his father enclosed in a ball of myrrh, that he might bury it in the temple of the Sun. Our author did not seem to be acquainted with that other version of the phoenix fable, according to which it returned from the east after a stated period to burn itself in frankincense, and was again resuscitated. The phoenix was an emblem of the soul and its supposed migrations, and its journey to the east typified the constant aspiration of the soul towards the sun. Its period of migration referred to a solar cycle in the Egyptian calendar. Pliny says that the name was derived from a species of palm in Lower Egypt, which dies down to the root and then is renovated. Ovid makes the bird build its nest on a palm. In hieroglyphic language the palm-bough is the sign of the year.

Amongst other wonders, our author had heard of winged serpents, which flew across from Arabia, and was induced to undertake a journey to the country whence they came, where he says he saw some of their bones. The ibises were said to destroy them as they

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\* Apparently an attempt to write the name *msah*, still to be traced in the Arabic *temsah*.—See Sir G. Wilkinson's note, Rawlinson, ii. 116



flew, which caused this bird to be held in great honor by the Egyptians. We are now in possession of the probable key to this enigmatical story, which illustrates both the simple faith and painstaking of our author, and also the manner in which myths grow out of the use of words. When scorpions or snakes appear in large numbers in the houses in Upper Egypt, they are supposed to be brought by the wind, and to all such objects an Arabic word is applied which signifies to fly. Herodotus doubtless saw pictures of a winged serpent attacked by the ibis, but this bird typified the god Osiris in the white robes of his purity and the winged serpent probably the Evil principle. The ibis, however, is said to destroy snakes. His mention of the harmless horned snakes at Thebes, which were considered sacred, and buried in the temple, may suggest the prolific subject of primeval serpent-worship.

The description which Herodotus gives of the manners and customs of the Egyptians stamps them as a highly civilized people. In the reverence paid by young men to their elders, he considered that they set a good example to the Greeks. In the medical profession they recognized a minute division of labor, some being oculists, others dentists, and so forth.\* Those who embalmed the dead (the "physicians" of the book of Genesis) formed a profession of themselves. He describes at length three methods of embalming (they had really many more), which were adopted in order to suit the means of their customers, as modern undertakers provide for funerals at different tariffs. Amongst other local peculiarities, Herodotus notices

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\* "O virgin, daughter of Egypt, in vain shalt thou use many medicines."—Jer. xlv. 11.

the lotus-eaters of the marsh-lands, who remind us of those described by Homer in the voyage of Ulysses. But these latter—if they are to be identified at all—are to be recognized rather in the lotus-eating tribe whom our author mentions in a subsequent book as existing on the coast of Africa. Their lotus was probably a kind of jujube (*Zizyphus napeca*). The Egyptian lotus was a kind of water-lily, the centre of whose blossom was dried, crushed, and eaten, as also its round root. The seeds of another water-lily, whose blossoms were like a rose, were also eaten, as well as the lower stems of the byblus or papyrus, whose leaves were used for paper and other purposes. The mosquitoes were as great a nuisance in Egypt formerly as now. Herodotus says that some of the natives, to avoid them, slept on towers exposed to the wind; but in the marshes each man had a net, which served the double purpose of catching fish by day and acting as a mosquito-curtain at night.

For the early history of the country Herodotus had to depend upon his informants, who were usually the priests, especially those of Heliopolis—the Greek name by which he knew the oldest capital of Egypt, *Ei n-re*, the On or Aon of the Hebrew Scriptures—the “City of the Sun.”\* Their colleges of priests there was in fact the university of Egypt; and whatever faith we may place in their historical records, their proficiency in mathematics and astronomy was very considerable indeed. They asserted that the first kings of Egypt were

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\* The “Aven” of Ezek. xxx. 17; translated into the Hebrew *Beth-shemesh*—“House of the Sun”—Jer. xliii. 18. The silt of the Nile has now covered most of its monuments and buildings, but its massive walls may still be traced, and a solitary granite obelisk, said to be near 4000 years old, marks what was the entrance to the temple of the Sun.

gods, "who dwelt upon earth with men." The last of this divine dynasty was Horus, son of Osiris—whom the Greeks identified with Apollo. The sufferings and death of Osiris were the great mystery of the Egyptian creed. Herodotus had seen his burial-place at Saïs, and knew the mysterious rites with which, under cover of night, these sufferings were commemorated. But he "will by no means speak of them," or even mention the god by name. Either the priests had enjoined secrecy upon him as the price of their information; or perhaps, being himself initiated in the Greek Mysteries, he had a scrupulous reverence for those of Egypt. Osiris was the great principle of Good, who slew his brother Typhon, the representative of Evil; and is pictured in the hieroglyphic paintings as the great judge of the dead. The first king of the human race was Mên, or Menes, the founder of Memphis, who began a line of three hundred and thirty monarchs (including one queen), whose names were read off to Herodotus from a roll of papyrus. Eighteen were said to be Ethiopians. Of most of these kings the priests professed to know little more than the names; but Mœris, the last of them, left his name to a large artificial lake, or reservoir, near the "City of Crocodiles," from which water was conveyed to all parts of the neighborhood. His successor, Sesostris, is said to have conquered all Asia, and even to have subdued Scythia and Thrace, in Europe, marking the limits of his conquests by pillars—two of which, in Palestine, Herodotus declares that he himself saw.\* Sesostris, after his return from his conquests, met with somewhat too warm a welcome

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\* There is little doubt that these are the tablets still to be seen near Beyrout.

from his brother, whom he had left viceroy of Egypt. He invited the hero and his family to a banquet, heaped wood all round the building, and set fire to it. Sesostris only escaped by sacrificing (by the mother's advice) two of his six sons, whose bodies he used to bridge the circle of flame. Having inflicted condign punishment on his brother, he then proceeded to utilize the vast multitudes of captives whom he had brought with him. By the employment of this forced labor he changed the face of Egypt, completely intersecting it with canals, and filling it with public buildings of unparalleled magnificence. The second king after Sesostris bore a Greek name, but must be regarded as a very apocryphal personage—Proteus, who was said to have entertained at his court no less famous a visitor than Helen, the heroine of the Trojan war. For the Egyptian priests had their version, too, of that wondrous Tale. According to them, the Spartan princess was driven by stress of weather to Egypt on her forced elopement with Paris, while Troy was besieged by the Greeks, in the belief that she was there. King Proteus, when he heard the story, gave Helen refuge, but dismissed Paris at once with disgrace. Herodotus accuses Homer of knowing this legend, which was a more probable version of the story than his own, and suppressing it for poetical purposes, since he speaks of the long wanderings of Helen, and of Menelaus's visit to Egypt. The priests told him that their predecessors had the story from Menelaus himself, who went to Egypt to fetch Helen, when he found, after the capture of Troy, that she was not there. Herodotus himself saw in the sacred precincts at Memphis a temple to "Venus the Foreigner," whom his Greek patriotism at once identified with Helen.

A story told at considerable length by Herodotus of the next king, Rhampsinitus, is highly characteristic, showing that sympathy of the Greek mind for clever rascality which recalls Homer's manifest enjoyment of the wily tricks of Ulysses in the "Odyssey." The story of "The Treasury of Rhampsinitus," which has been borrowed also by the Italian novelists, reads as if it were taken from the "Arabian Nights."

King Rhampsinitus, having vast treasure of silver, built for its safe keeping a chamber of hewn stone one of whose walls formed also the outer wall of his palace. His architect, however, having designs on the treasure, built a stone into the wall, which even one man who knew the secret could easily displace. He did not live long enough to carry out his views, but on his deathbed explained the contrivance to his two sons, for whose sake he said he had devised it, that they might live as rich men, since the secret would make them virtual chancellors of the royal exchequer through their lives. After his death, the sons profited by his instructions to remove a considerable sum. The king, when next he came to visit the room, missed his money, finding it standing at a lower level in the vessels. This happened again and again, though the seals and fastenings of the room were as secure as ever. At last he set a man-trap inside. When the thieves next made their usual visit, one of them found himself suddenly caught. Seeing no hope of escape, he called to his brother to come and cut off his head, to prevent his being recognized. The brother obeyed; and, after replacing the stone, made his way home with the head. When the king entered at day-break, he greatly marveled to see a headless trunk in the gin, while the building seemed still to be fast closed all round. To find out to whom the body be-

longed, he ordered it to be hung outside the palace-wall, and set a guard to watch, and bring before him any persons they might observe lamenting over it. The mother of the dead man, hearing of this desecration of a corpse that should have been a mummy, told her surviving son that unless he contrived to rescue it, she would go and tell the king that he was the robber. Wearied with her continual reproaches, at last the brother filled some skins with wine, loaded them on asses, and drove them by the place where the guards were watching the dead body. Then he slyly untied the necks of some of the skins. The wine of course began to run out, upon which he fell to wailing and beating his head, as if distracted, and not knowing to which donkey he should run first to staunch the wine. This highly amused the guards, who ran eagerly to catch the wine in all the vessels they could lay hands on. Then the driver pretended to get into a passion, and abused them, upon which they did their best to quiet him. At last, appearing to be put in good-humor again by their raillery, he gave them one of the skins to drink. They invited him to help them with the drinking, as they had helped him in putting the skins in order. As the wine went round all got more and more friendly, till they broached another skin, and at last the guards all got so drunk that they went to sleep on the spot. In the dead of the night the thief took down the body of his brother, laid it upon the asses, and made off, having first remained long enough to shave off the right whiskers of each of the men,—which was considered a deadly insult. When the king heard of this he was more vexed than ever, and determined to find out the thief at any cost. He bade his daughter keep open house for all comers, and promise to marry the man who would tell her most to



her satisfaction the cleverest and wickedest thing he had ever done. If any one told her the story of the robbery, she was to lay hold of him. But the thief was not to be thus outwitted. He procured a dead man's arm, put it under his dress, and went to call on the princess. When she put the question, he answered at once that the wickedest thing he had ever done was cutting off his brother's head in the king's treasury, and the cleverest was making the guards drunk, and carrying off his body. The princess made a grasp at him, but in the darkness he left the arm of the corpse in her hand and fled. But now the king was overwhelmed with astonishment and admiration for the man's cleverness, and made a proclamation of free pardon and a rich reward, if the thief would declare himself. He boldly came forward, and Rhampsinitus gave him his daughter in marriage. "The Egyptians," he said, "are the wisest of men, and thou art the wisest of the Egyptians."

Till the death of Rhampsinitus Egypt enjoyed prosperity. Cheops, who succeeded him, and who built the Great Pyramid, is said to have shut up all the temples, that his people might do nothing but work for him; and he kept a hundred thousand laboring at a time, who were relieved every three months. It took ten years to make the causeway (of which traces still remain) for the conveyance of stones, and another twenty to build the Pyramid itself. The next kings, Chephren and Mycerinus (Mencheres) likewise built pyramids, but on a smaller scale. The memory of Cheops and Chephren, in consequence of their oppressions, became so odious to the Egyptians that they would not even mention their names; but upon Mycerinus, though he was just and merciful, there fell the punishment due for their sins. First he lost his only daughter, and then an

oracle told him that he had but six years to live. He expostulated with the oracle, saying it was hard that he who was a good and righteous king should die early, while his father and uncle, who were so impious, lived long. The oracle answered—"For that very reason thou must die, for Egypt was destined to suffer ill for one hundred and fifty years, and thou hinderest the doom from being fulfilled." On this Mycerinus, finding it useless to be virtuous, determined to outwit the gods; so he lighted lamps at nightfall, and turned all the nights into days, and enjoyed them as well as the days, in feasting in all pleasant places. Thus he lived twelve years in the space of six, making his six years one long day of continuous revel. The story of Mycerinus has been very happily treated in one of Matthew Arnold's earliest poems.\*

After him came a blind king named Anysis, during whose reign Egypt was invaded by the Ethiopians, who lorded it over the country for fifty years. He was suc-

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\* Its moral—if it has any—may be found in Moore's song—

"And the best of all ways  
To lengthen our days

Is to steal a few hours from the night, my dear."

"I will unfold my sentence and my crime ;

My crime, that, rapt in reverential awe,

I sate obedient, in the fiery prime

Of youth, self-governed, at the feet of Law,

Ennobling this dull pomp, the life of kings,

With contemplation of diviner things.

"My father loved injustice, and lived long:

Crowned with gray hairs, he died, and full of sway.

I loved the good he scorned, and hated wrong ;

The gods declare my recompense to-day.

I looked for life more lasting, rule more high—

And when six years are measured, lo, I die!"

ceeded by Sethos, a priest of Vulcan, who oppressed the warrior caste, so that they refused to serve him when Sennacherib, king of the Assyrians, invaded the country. But a vision in the sanctuary bade him be of good cheer; and when he went out to the frontier with an army of citizens, trusting in divine aid, a number of field-mice came in the night and gnawed the bow-strings, quivers, and shield-straps of the enemy, so that the Egyptians easily defeated them. Such is the dim tradition which reached the historian of the mysterious destruction of the Assyrian host recorded in the Scriptures. The mouse, according to some interpreters of hieroglyphic language, was the symbol of destruction. Thus far Herodotus had derived his information as to early Egyptian history entirely from the priests. He computed that the reigns of these kings, as given him, would require eleven thousand three hundred and forty years.

A revolution seemed to have occurred after the death of Sethos, by which twelve provincial kings, like those of the Saxon Heptarchy, reigned at once. Their great work was a labyrinth near Lake Moëris, which struck Herodotus as one of the wonders of the world—more wonderful even than the Pyramids themselves. One of the twelve, Psammetichus, at length managed to depose the rest by the aid of Greek mercenaries. His son, Nechos (Pharaoh Necho), is credited by Herodotus with the first attempt to construct the canal to the Red Sea, which was afterwards finished by Darius Hystaspes. The canal, however, was more probably begun by Sesostris (Rameses II.), and there appears to be evidence that it was choked by sand (which is still the difficulty with modern engineers), and reopened many times—by the Ptolemies, for instance, and the Arabs. Necho is

mentioned in Scripture as having defeated and slain King Josiah at Megiddo on his way to attack the Assyrians. Herodotus briefly notices the victory, but calls the place Magdolus, after which he says that Necho took the city of Cadytis, supposed to be either Jerusalem or Gaza. In a subsequent expedition, which Herodotus does not mention, he himself was defeated by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and lost all his conquests. He was succeeded by his son Psammis, and his grandson Apries (the Pharaoh-Hophra of Jeremiah). The latter had a long and prosperous reign; but failing in an attack on the Greek city of Cyrene, his army revolted from him, and chose Amasis, an officer who had been sent to reason with them, for their king. Apries on this armed his Greek mercenaries, amounting to thirty thousand men, and went to meet the revolted Egyptians. In the battle which ensued he was defeated and taken prisoner by Amasis, who finally gave him up to his former subjects, with whom he was unpopular, and they strangled him. Amasis was a coarse but humorous character, rather proud than otherwise of his low origin. Finding that his subjects despised him for it, he broke up a golden foot-path, and made of it an image of one of the gods, which the Egyptians proceeded to worship. He then told them what it was made of, adding that "his own fortune had been that of the foot-pan;" thus anticipating the adage of Burns—

"The rank is but the guinea-stamp,  
The man's the gowd for a' that."

When his courtiers reproved his undignified revels in his hours of relaxation, whereas none could complain of his inattention to business, he met them with the

proverb, now common to most languages, that a bow becomes useless if not sometimes unstrung. His habits were certainly open to remark. To find money for his pleasures before he came to the throne, he occasionally took to highway robbery. The oracular shrines were the police offices of those times, and Amasis, like other thieves, was cited in such cases before the nearest oracle. Some of them would acquit, others find him guilty. When he became king, he honored the oracles which had detected him very highly, but the others he despised. But he was a great king, in spite of his failings; and Egypt is said to have prospered more under him than under any of his predecessors. One of his laws was, that every man should appear once a year before the governor of his department, and prove, on pain of death, that he was getting an honest livelihood. Herodotus says that Solon borrowed this law from the Egyptians, and that it was in force at Athens up to his own days. If this be true, it fell into disuse soon after his time, as the Athenians enjoyed a reputation above all nations in the world for "gracefully going idle." We may at least join in his remark, that this ordinance of Amasis was "a most excellent custom," towards which our modern civilization is making timid approaches. We shall hear of this king again in connection with Polycrates, the despot of Samos.

The account which Herodotus here gives of the kings of Egypt, however interesting and entertaining, must be read with the full understanding that its value in a historical point of view is about the same as that of Livy's popular account of the early kings of Rome. He was unacquainted with the Egyptian language, and though the priests may not have purposely imposed upon him, he had to depend on the anecdotes which

came to him through the medium of the caste of drago-  
mans who were settled at Memphis. In consequence  
of this, the consecutiveness and general symmetry of  
his account only serve to conceal some palpable mis-  
statements. Perhaps the greatest is that which makes  
the builders of the Pyramids later in time than the  
builders of the temples and other monuments. Modern  
investigations have tended to give great weight to the  
authority of a native chronicler, spoken of with much  
respect by early Christian writers, but who afterwards  
fell into disrepute—Manetho, the high-priest in the  
days of Ptolemy Philadelphus. His record is utterly  
fatal to the main facts of the account given by He-  
rodotus. After dynasties of gods and heroes which  
reigned more than sixteen thousand years, he brings  
us to the builders of the Pyramids, whom Herodotus  
places at a late period of his history, perhaps because  
his Greek informants first became acquainted with the  
monuments at Memphis itself. He was probably fur-  
nished with two distinct lists of kings, both to a great  
extent mythical, which he took to be separate and  
successive dynasties. Cheops is almost certainly iden-  
tical with Menes, the first human king of Herodotus, in  
whose time was effected the canalization of the Delta.  
He is the traditional builder of the Great Pyramid, and  
Chemmis (the Sun) appears as one of his titles, at once  
connecting him with the sun-worship. The Pyramids  
are supposed to have been built before the time of  
Abraham, with the Pharaoh of whose times Achthoes  
of the 11th dynasty has been identified. The name  
Pharaoh itself continues the title assumed by Cheops,  
in its meaning of “children of the sun.”

The Mycerinus of Herodotus is found to resolve him-  
self into two kings, the Mencheres who built the Pyra-



mids, and another much later king, of whom the story of turning night into day is told; a legend which may have originated in the torch-light festival of Osiris and Isis. Sesostris also resolves himself into two kings—Sethos, the great engineer and builder, and Rameses II., the great conqueror whose victories are recorded in the temples at Karnak and Luxor, and whose fallen statue at Luxor is the largest in the world. After him came Menephthes or Amenonoph, who has been identified with the Pharaoh of Exodus. The Shishak of Scripture has been confounded with Sesostris, but he came far too late, and is now identified with one Sesorchis. But the identification of any of these kings is as yet very uncertain.

Among other stories in the second book of Herodotus is one not quite presentable to the general reader, about a Greek beauty of doubtful repute, named Rhodōpis (“Rosy-cheek”), who had been brought as a slave to Egypt, and who was said to have built one of the Pyramids. Strabo embellishes her history by telling how, when this lady was bathing, an eagle carried off one of her sandals, and deposited it before the king of Egypt’s throne, who was so struck by the suggested beauty of the foot which it fitted that he sent for her and made her his queen. Such is the venerable antiquity of the story of Cinderella.

It is remarkable that Herodotus says nothing about the Great Sphinx, which strikes all modern travelers so forcibly, and which plays so prominent a part in the legends of the Greek Thebes. He must have seen it, but may have thought it (as he did other things in this mysterious country) “too sacred to mention.” Its composite form is supposed to be emblematic of Nature, and connected in some way with the inundations of the Nile.

This second book of Herodotus brings the history of

Egypt as an independent power to a close. It is an inexhaustibly rich mine of historical, archæological, and mythological wealth, on whose endless shafts and galleries modern discovery is ever throwing some new light. Formerly the deciphering of the hieroglyphic writing, in which all Egyptian sacred records were kept, was looked upon as all but hopeless, but since the key was supplied by the discovery of the famous Rosetta stone, which bore a Greek translation of its hieroglyphic inscription, scientific patience has been abundantly rewarded. Religion is essentially conservative, and older dialects and characters are continued in her service long after they have been superseded in secular use. We may cite as an example the Church Slavonic dialect of the north, so valuable to philologists; the Sanskrit of India; the Latin still in use in the Roman Catholic ritual. Even in England we still use archaic characters for the inscriptions in our churches, but this is no doubt partly because of their greater picturesqueness.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### CAMBYSES.

“The race of mortal Man is far too weak  
To grow not dizzy on unwonted heights.”

—GOETHE, “Iphigenia.”

As soon after the death of Cyrus as the Persian arms were at liberty, we find them directed against Egypt. The former alliance of that country with Lydia might seem an adequate cause for the invasion, but it is too prosaic for the taste of Herodotus. He makes Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, march against Amasis because

he had practiced on him a deceit something like that of Laban towards Jacob, by sending him as a wife the daughter of the late king, Apries, instead of his own. Cambyzes was, at all events, no safe subject for a practical joke, and Amasis might have found to his cost that he had jested once too often.

Having purchased a safe-conduct through the desert by swearing brotherhood with the chief of the Arabs,\*—by a process much the same as that described by modern African travelers, which consisted in the contracting parties mixing a little of their blood,†—Cambyzes set out for Egypt. But death had put Amasis beyond the reach of all enemies, and his son Psammenitus now reigned in his stead. Dire misfortunes had been portended to the country by the unusual phenomenon of a shower of rain at Thebes. After an obstinate battle, Psammenitus was utterly routed. Herodotus went afterwards over the field, and saw there the bones of the Persians lying in one heap, and those of the Egyptians in another. He remarked that the skulls

\* "The safe-conduct granted by the chief of the Bedouins," says Kinglake, "is never, I believe, violated."

† "Several of our men made brotherhood with the Wezees, and the process between Bombay and the sultan's son Keerenga, may be mentioned. My consent having been given, a mat is spread, and a confidential party or surgeon attends on each. All four squat, as if to have a game at whist; before them are two clean leaves, a little grease, and a spear-head; a cut is made under the ribs of the left side of each party, a drop of blood put on a leaf and exchanged by the surgeons, who rub it with butter twice into the wound with the leaf, which is now torn in pieces and strewn over the "brothers'" heads. A solemn address is made by the older of the attendants, and they conclude the ceremony by rubbing their own sides with butter, shaking hands, and wishing each other success."—Grant's "Walk through Africa," p. 108.

of the former might be broken by a pebble, while those of the latter resisted even a large stone. This observation he afterwards verified by personal inspection of another battle-field, where a Persian force was subsequently defeated by the revolted Egyptians under Inaros. He attributes the difference to the Egyptians going bareheaded in the sun, while the Persians wore turbans. The Persians followed up their victory by the capture of the city of Memphis and of Psammenitus himself, on which occasion our author introduces one of his characteristic pathetic stories. Cambyeses wishing, says Herodotus, "to try the spirit" of his royal prisoner, ordered Psammenitus and some of the captive nobles to be brought out to the gates of the city. Then he caused the deposed king's daughter, and those of the nobles, to be led past in the dress of slaves, carrying pitchers on their heads. The nobles wept at the sight, but Psammenitus only bowed his head. Next followed his son and two thousand other young Egyptians, going to execution with ropes round their necks. The people of Memphis had torn limb from limb the crew of a ship which Cambyeses had sent with a summons to surrender, and this was his reprisal—ten for every man murdered. The nobles again wept and wailed loudly, but Psammenitus comported himself as before. But when he saw one of his former boon companions, an old man now reduced to beggary, asking alms from the soldiers, then his grief broke forth in tears, and he beat himself on the head. Cambyeses was amazed that he should weep at the fate of his friend, and not at that of his daughter or son, and sent to ask him the reason of his strange conduct. Psammenitus answered, "O son of Cyrus, mine own misfortunes were too great for tears." Cambyeses was sufficiently

touched to order the life of the young prince to be spared, but the reprieve came too late. But from that time Psammenitus was treated better, and might, as Herodotus thinks, had he shown more tact, have been appointed governor of Egypt, since it was the Persian custom thus to honor fallen princes, even giving the kingdoms of rebel vassals to their sons.\* But he was unwise enough to plot rebellion, and Cambyzes, discovering this, put him to death.

And now the son of Cyrus entered on that career of impiety which was certain to have an evil end. He had the body of his enemy Amasis, who had escaped his vengeance while living, torn from its tomb, scourged, and committed to the flames—an act horrible to the Persians, who worshiped fire; horrible to the Egyptians, who looked upon that element as a devouring monster to whom it was impious to give their dead. Then, according to Greek poetical justice, he was seized by infatuation. He planned wild expeditions—one against “the Long-lived” Ethiopians, who dwelt far away to the south, and who might perhaps be identified with the modern Abyssinians (Heeren thinks, with the Somalis) by certain characteristics, such as tall stature, regular though black features, and a great love of animal food. Whoever they were, they are the subject of one of our author’s most characteristic narratives. Cambyzes sent envoys to them—men of the tribe of “Fish-eaters,” who knew their language—with presents for their king: a purple robe, a collar and arm-

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\* We have notable instances of this habit in Eastern monarchs recorded in Scripture. Jehoiakim is made king instead of his brother Jehoahaz, by Pharaoh-Nechoh (2 Kings xxiii. 34; Mattaniah instead of his nephew Jehoiachin, by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings xxiv. 17).

lets of gold, and a cask of palm wine, tokens of his goodwill, as "the things in which he himself most delighted." The Ethiopian king—who was elected for his stature and beauty—made answer almost in the words of Joseph to his brethren: "Surely to search out the land are ye come hither." He asked how the purple robe was made; and when they explained the mystery of the dye, he said that the Persians' garments, like themselves, were deceitful. When told the purpose of the golden collar and armlets, he chose to consider them as fetters, and remarked that "the Ethiopians made them stronger." In fact, as Herodotus declares, the envoys saw men afterwards in prison actually wearing fetters of a metal which was there so plentiful. Only the wine he highly approved of, and asked what the king of Persia ate, and how long men lived in that country. When he heard that corn was the staple food, and that it grew out of the earth, and that eighty years was considered a long life, he replied that he did not wonder at the king's dying so young if he "ate dirt," and that nothing, he was persuaded, could keep him alive even so long, except that excellent liquor. He sent back in return an unstrung bow, with advice that, when the Persians could find a man to bend it, they should then think of attacking the "Long-livers."

Against this distant tribe, however, the Persian king set out with a vast army, without bestowing a thought on his commissariat. Before he had accomplished a fifth of the distance the provisions failed, but he still pushed on. The army fed on the sumpter-beasts till they were exhausted; then on herbs and grass, till they came to the sandy desert, where vegetation ended. At last, when he heard of cannibalism in the ranks Cam-



byses thought it was time to return; but he succeeded in bringing back only a small remnant of his host. Another expedition, sent against the temple of Ammon, in the Great Oasis, fared even worse, for no news came of it more. It perished, our author thinks, in a sand-storm—more probably from want of water. But Cambyses' heart was hardened. When he returned from his ill-starred march, he found the Egyptians holding high festival. This greatly incensed him, for he thought they were rejoicing at his defeat. But they were innocently celebrating the incarnation of their national god Apis or Epaphus, who was said to appear from time to time in the similitude "of a calf that eateth hay," and whose "avatar" in that form was denoted by certain sacred marks known to his priests. Cambyses was still more angry when he heard the real cause of this national jubilee: he had the priests scourged all round, forbade the people to rejoice on pain of death, and, to crown all, fell on the sacred beast and wounded him with his dagger, so that he pined away and died. From this precise date, as the Egyptians averred, the madness of Cambyses took a more decided character. But his acts, however unaccountable to a Greek mind, seem to have been little more than those of an Eastern despot of fierce passions and naturally cruel disposition. First he had his brother Smerdis put to death, and then he killed his sister because she mourned for Smerdis. He had sent this brother back to Persia because he excited his jealousy by being the only Persian who could just move the Ethiopian's bow; and then, having dreamed that he saw Smerdis sitting on his throne and touching heaven with his head, he sent a nobleman named Prexaspes to Susa, who slew him according to his instructions. The story of the murder of the sister was differently told

by the Persians and Egyptians. The former said that Cambyses, in the presence of his sister, had set a puppy to fight a lion-cub. The dog was getting the worst of it, when another of the same litter broke the cord that tied him, and came "to help his brother," and both of them together mastered the young lion. Cambyses was amused, but his sister wept, and said that she could not but think of Smerdis, who had no brother to help him. For this speech he killed her. The Egyptians said that the pair were seated at table, when the sister took a lettuce, and, stripping its leaves off, asked Cambyses whether it looked better with its leaves off or on? He answered, "With its leaves on." "Then why," said she, "didst thou strip of its leaves the stem of Cyrus?" A furious kick which followed this remark was the cause of her death. In fact, Cambyses had now become dangerous to all about him. Cræsus, whom he had brought with him to Egypt, had more than one narrow escape. On one occasion officers were sent to put him to death, but they, knowing their master's moods, only pretended to have done it, and produced Cræsus alive as soon as Cambyses was heard to regret the order. He was well pleased that his friend had not been killed, but the disobedience cost the guards their lives. Another time he shot the son of Prexaspes through the heart to prove the steadiness of his hand, merely because the father had told him in answer to a question, that the Persians said he was rather too fond of wine. Probably for some similar offensive remark he buried up to their necks twelve of his nobles—a cruel process still practiced in the East under the name of "tree-planting."\* And he grew more and more profane.

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\* "Feti-Ali-Shah once sent for Astra-chan, one of his courtiers, and with an appearance of great friendship took him round his garden, showing him all its beauties. When he had finished

He opened tombs and unrolled mummies like a modern virtuoso. He made sport of the pigmy images of Pthah, or Vulcan, whose ludicrous ugliness must have presented the grim humorist with an irresistible temptation,\* and other sacred idols he burnt. Herodotus expresses himself much shocked at all this; but he might have known that the Persians were in general iconoclasts. It is possible that Cambyzes was inspired with the same destructive zeal which induced the more modern Puritans to clear away the saints from the niches of our cathedrals. But as a Greek our author would sympathize with the Egyptians. It is hard for us to judge how far some of the cruelties reported of Cambyzes may have been the invention of the outraged priests. He has recorded, in another part of his work, an anecdote which illustrates at once the character of Cambyzes and the general incorruptibility of the royal judges of Persia. One of these, named Sisamnes, was found to have accepted bribes. Cambyzes, with the facetious cruelty so common to tyrants of his type, had him flayed, and his skin stretched over the seat which he had occupied while administering the law. He then appointed his son to the vacant post, charging him at the same time never to forget "on what kind of cushion he was sitting."

The modern reader will agree with Herodotus that it is at least right to treat with delicacy the peculiar

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the circuit, he appealed to Astra-chan to know 'what his garden still lacked?' 'Nothing,' said the courtier; 'it is quite perfect.' 'I think differently,' replied the king; 'I must decidedly plant a tree in it.' Astra-chan, who knew the king's meaning only too well, fell at his feet and begged his life, which he obtained only at the price of surrendering to the king the lady to whom he was betrothed."—Rawlinson, ii. 361, note.

\* See the woodcuts and note, Rawlinson, ii. 431.

usages of others. Aristotle quotes one of his anecdotes to illustrate the opinion of those who held that all right and wrong were conventional. King Darius Hystaspes called certain Greeks into his presence, and asked them what they would take to eat their dead fathers? They said that they would do it for no consideration whatever. Then he asked a certain tribe of Indians what they would take *not* to eat the bodies of their fathers, but to burn them like the Greeks? They cried aloud, and begged him not to blaspheme. So Sir John Lubbock, in his "Prehistoric Times," relates that the Tahitians think it indecent to dine in company; and that as soon as a child is born he is accounted the head of his family, and takes precedence of his father. And the tyranny of public opinion in matters indifferent, of which we complain so often, finds its strongest exemplification among the semi-brutal savages of Australia.

The death of Smerdis had come to the knowledge of but few persons in Persia, and while Cambyzes was absent in Egypt, the priest-caste of the Magi made a bold attempt at a revolution. It is probable that under Cyrus and Cambyzes this caste, with their peculiar tenets, had been discouraged. A certain Magian, who was a kind of groom of the palace, had a brother\* who resembled greatly the dead Smerdis, and who (according to Herodotus) bore the same name.\* Patizethes seated his brother on the throne, and sent out a proclamation that henceforth all men were to do homage to Smerdis the son of Cyrus, and

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\* The Behistun inscription gives the name as Gomates, and does not speak of two brothers. Mr. Rawlinson seems to prove clearly that the revolution was a religious one, though nothing to that effect appears in Herodotus.—See his Essay, iii. 548.

no longer to Cambyzes. When Cambyzes heard of this, he thought that Prexaspes had not done his errand, and that it was really his brother Smerdis who had revolted against him; but Prexaspes satisfied him that his orders had been duly executed, and that this was a usurper personating the dead prince. He was at once struck by remorse, seeing that his fratricide had been useless, for his dream was so far fulfilled that a man called Smerdis sat on his throne; and he prepared to march at once in person to Susa to quell the rebellion. As he was mounting his horse, the knob of his sword-sheath fell off, and the bare point of the weapon pierced his thigh, exactly as he had pierced with his dagger the god Apis. His wound brought him to his senses, and he solemnly conjured the Persian nobles to prevent the empire from passing to the Medes, confessing that he had killed his brother Smerdis, and that therefore the present occupant of the throne must be an impostor. The wounded limb soon mortified, and Cambyzes died in Egypt, leaving no issue. Before his death he asked the name of the village where he lay. He was answered that it was called "Ecbatana." Then he knew that he should die; for an oracle had long ago predicted that he should die at Ecbatana—which he naturally took to be his own town in Media. The coincidence with the death of our own Henry IV. in the "Jerusalem chamber" is very curious.

"It hath been prophesied to me many years  
I should not die but in Jerusalem,  
Which vainly I supposed the Holy Land;  
But bear me to that chamber; there I'll lie,—  
In that Jerusalem shall Harry die." \*

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\* "Henry IV.," Part 2, Act iv. sc. 4.

## CHAPTER V.

DARIUS.

"In the theater of the World  
The people are actors all.  
One doth the sovereign monarch play,  
And him the rest obey."—CALDERON.

THE jealous hatred which Cambyses bore to his brother Smerdis was so well known, that the Persians did not believe his dying declaration that the person who had seized his throne was an impostor. They accepted him as the true Smerdis, son of Cyrus. Such impostures are possible enough in a credulous age. A false Demetrius plays an important part in the history of Russia. There were many who disbelieved the fact of the two English princes having been smothered in the Tower; and many more, at quite a recent date, have believed that Louis XVII. escaped his jailers, and grew up to manhood. The secluded life of an Eastern monarch would give such an imposture additional chances of success.

The Magian usurper reigned for eight months under the name of Smerdis, giving great satisfaction to most of his subjects, for under him "the empire was peace." He remitted the heaviest taxes, and enforced no military conscription. At last his imposture came to light. Otanes, a Persian nobleman, whose daughter was one of his wives, was informed by her that her husband had no ears. Now the Magian was known to have lost his for some offence in the time of Cyrus.\* The result

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\* This is the mildest form of mutilation, as the feature seems more ornamental than useful, except to those savage tribes in



of this revelation was, that Otanes headed the famous conspiracy of the seven nobles, of whom Darius, the son of Hystaspes, sprung from a collateral branch of the royal family, and probably the next legal heir, was one. While they were concocting their plan of attack, a tragical event happened which made immediate action necessary. The Magians, knowing how cruelly Prexaspes had been treated by Cambyses,\* thought it their interest to conciliate him, and prevailed upon him to mount on a tower of the palace-wall, and make a speech to the people below, who had grown suspicious, to the effect that their present king was the true Smerdis, the son of Cyrus. But in this they made as fatal a mistake as Shakespeare's Brutus and Cassius did when they allowed Mark Antony to speak at Cæsar's funeral. Prexaspes, instead of lying to please the Magians, proclaimed aloud the real state of the case, and then threw himself from the tower, and was killed on the spot.

The seven conspirators gained the presence of the false king and his brother with no great difficulty, but within they met with such resistance that two were badly wounded before they succeeded in dispatching them. The others cut off the Magians' heads, carried them forth, and showed them to the populace. A general massacre of the Magian caste followed, which lasted till the night. Few of them survived this St.

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whom the muscle that moves the ear is developed. It was practiced in England as late as the seventeenth century, for such offences as Nonconformity, Petty Treason, Libel, and the like. Prynne is a well-known instance. It is common now in Africa, and is said to give the head the look of a barber's block, but to be attended with no great inconvenience. The false Smerdis, as has been said, never went abroad, and probably wore his turban low on his head.

\* See p. 66.

Bartholomew of Susa. During the annual festival held henceforth under the name of Magophonia, which we might call the "Median Vespers," none of the hated class dared be seen abroad, though tolerated at other times.

The seven noblemen, according to Herodotus, now resolved themselves into a debating society, for the purpose of discussing different forms of government. That is to say, he here avails himself of an author's favorite license to propound theories of his own. His sympathies are plainly with democracy, but historical exigencies obliged him to admit that monarchy was adopted. They agreed that one of the seven should be king, and the rest his peers, having free access to the royal presence on all but certain stated occasions. It was then arranged that all should ride their horses to an open place at sunrise, and choose as king the man whose horse was the first to neigh. This was really an appeal to the sun, to whom the horse was sacred. The omen fell to Darius, by the cunning management of his equerry, and he was at once hailed as king. When he was established in the kingdom he is said to have set up the figure of a man on horseback, with a commemorative inscription. The story may have been invented subsequently, to account for this work of art, as often happens.

Most valuable light has been thrown on the history of Darius by the discovery of the great Behistun inscription. On the western frontier of the ancient Media there is a precipitous rock 1700 feet high, which forms a portion of the Zagros chain, separating the table-land of Iran from the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates. The inscription can only be reached with difficulty, as it is 300 feet from the

base of the rock. It is in three languages, old Persian, Babylonian, and Scythian, executed, according to Sir H. Rawlinson, in the fifth year of Darius, B.C. 516. The wedge-shaped letters of the Persian copy were deciphered with infinite pains by this great archæologist. Darius mentions in it, under the name of Gaumata, a Magian who personated Bardes \* (as he calls him), the son of Cyrus, and says that he slew him by the help of Ormuzd, the Good Spirit, and thus recovered an empire that belonged to his own family, restoring to the Persians the religion which they had lost by the Magian intrusion. He also records that after this he was engaged in quelling a general revolt of the provinces. The main facts accord with those of Herodotus, though there is some difference in the nomenclature. The end of the inscription invokes a curse on any one who might injure it, and this has probably tended to preserve it; just as the curse on Shakespeare's monument, at Stratford-on-Avon, may have conduced to prevent officious veneration from "moving his bones."

Darius was the first monarch of Persia who regulated the revenues, and assigned the sum that each satrapy ought to pay to the royal treasury. This caused the haughty Persian aristocracy to say of him, in their contempt for red tape, that Cyrus had been a father to the state, Cambyzes a master, but Darius was "a huckster, who would make a gain of everything."

There can be no question that Herodotus had access,

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\* The *s*, whether at the beginning or end of Persian names, is commonly only a Greek addition. So Bardy (*a*)—the vowel being pronounced though not written—is Smerdis, Gaumat (*a*) becomes Gomates, Vashtasp (*a*) Hystaspes, etc.—See Rawlinson, I. 27-29, note.

either personally or through friends, to the royal records of Persia, or copies of them. He gives a complete list of the various satrapies into which the empire was divided, of the several subject nations which it comprised, and the form and amount of their tribute. The Persians themselves, it must be remarked, like the Magyar grandees in Hungary formerly, were exempt from taxation, and only bound to military service. He says that the Indians, the most numerous race of all, paid into the royal treasury three hundred and sixty talents in gold dust, and that the whole annual revenue was computed at fourteen thousand five hundred and sixty talents, besides a fraction—more than three millions and a half of our money. But it must be considered that this corresponds to the modern Civil List, serving only to defray the expenses of the Court. These Indians must not be supposed to be those of the Peninsula, but rather those of Scinde and the Punjab. The gold which they brought into the royal treasury was said to come from a great desert to the eastward. In this desert there were ants—"bigger than foxes"—and in their hills the gold was found. To procure it the gold-hunters took camels, chiefly females with young ones, with which they proceeded to the place at the hottest time of day, when the ants were in their holes, filled their bags with the auriferous sand, and then hurried back to escape the pursuit of the ants; the female camels leading the way, as anxious to get back to their young ones. The existence of these gigantic ants has been asserted by comparatively modern travellers, but it seems probable that they must have been really ant-eaters, which burrowed in the hills, and which some informants of Herodotus may have seen.

Among the barbarian tribes in dependence on Per

sia, he mentions one called the Padæans, who, like the Massagetæ before mentioned, allowed none of their sick to die a natural death. The horrible story is quaintly told. "If a man is taken ill, the men put him to death to prevent his flesh being spoiled by his malady. He protests loudly that he never felt better in his life; but they kill and eat him notwithstanding. So if a woman is ill, the women who are her friends do to her in like manner. (The decent division of the sexes is worth remarking.) If any one reaches old age—a very uncommon occurrence, for he can only do so on condition of never having been ill—they sacrifice him to the gods, and afterwards eat him." Marco Polo, the Venetian traveler, writing about 1500, found the practice existing in Sumatra, where the relations assembled in the sick man's house, suffocated him, and then ate him, as he describes it, "in a convivial manner." Among other wonders he mentions Arabian sheep (the forefathers, no doubt, of our "Cape" breed) which had tails three cubits long, for which the shepherds made little trucks to keep them off the ground—"each sheep having a truck of his own." The mention of remarkable countries and productions leads Herodotus to observe that, while the Greeks have the finest climate, as inhabiting the middle of the earth, yet the farthest inhabited regions have the finest productions—tin, amber, and gold coming, for instance, from the ends of the earth; but in respect of horses he gives the palm to the Nisæan breed of Media. Palgrave, in his "Travels in Arabia," speaks of the horses of Nedjid as the "cream of the cream" of equine aristocracy.

Soon after the accession of Darius, one of his seven fellow-conspirators, Intaphernes, got into trouble. He insisted on seeing the king during his hours of privacy,

and being denied, cut off the noses and ears of two of the palace officials, and hung them round their necks. This displeased the king so much that he condemned Intaphernes and all the males of his family to death. But Darius was touched with pity by the lamentations of the wife of Intaphernes, and allowed her to choose which of her family she would save. She chose her brother—explaining, when the king showed some astonishment at her selection, that such a loss could not possibly be replaced, her father and mother being dead. Pleased with her wit, Darius gave her the life of her eldest son into the bargain. Sophocles adopts the same curious sentiment in his tragedy of *Antigone*. The general justice of Darius would lead to the suspicion that the crime of Intaphernes was of the nature of high treason, otherwise his family would hardly have been involved in his punishment.

The story of Democedes, a famous surgeon of Crotona, who was brought to Persia as a slave, is introduced by Herodotus to find a motive for the attention of the king being called to Greece. He had abundant reasons besides, as the history shows; but our author will not desert the theory of his choice, that Woman is the mainspring in all human affairs. Democedes had got into favor at court by successful treatment first of Darius himself, then of Atossa the favorite sultana. For this latter service he obtained leave to name his own reward—it was, to be allowed to visit his home; and, as Darius wished also to conquer Greece, in order that Atossa's desire of having some of "those Lacedæmonian handmaidens of whom she had heard so much" might be gratified, Democedes was sent to make the tour of Greece and its colonies on the Italian coast with a party of spies. When he reached his native Crotona,



he chose to remain there, and was assisted by his fellow-townsmen against the Persians, who tried to take him back with them. He bade the latter tell Darius that he was about to be married to the daughter of Milo the wrestler; wishing the king to know that he was a man of some mark in his own country, where—as in some cases among us moderns—athletics ranked even higher than science. These spies were said to have been the first Persians who visited Greece.

But Darius had no time to think of Greece just then, as his hands were full with a revolt in Babylonia and other provinces, which appears to have assumed larger proportions than those known to Herodotus. Samos was the first state which was unfortunate enough to draw upon itself the might of the Persian arms. The cause of this war was a cloak. When Cambyses was in Egypt with his army, one Syloson, brother of Polycrates of Samos, was also there in exile. He appeared one day at Memphis in a scarlet cloak, to which Darius, who was then a plain officer of the royal guards, took a fancy, and asked the wearer to name his price. Syloson, in a fit of generosity, begged him to accept it as a present; and it had no sooner been accepted than he repented of his good-nature. As matters turned out, the cloak of Syloson became as famous as that of Sir Walter Raleigh. Raleigh “spoiled a cloak and made a fortune,” by spreading out his for Queen Elizabeth to walk on; Syloson, by giving his away, led the way to the ruin of his country. For when Darius came to the throne, Syloson introduced himself at court as the hero of the cloak, and Darius asked him what he could do for him in return. He requested to be put in possession of his late brother's dominion in Samos. Mæandrius, the secretary of Polycrates, who was at present in

possession, was a man who had had greatness thrust upon him. When Polycrates was murdered, the secretary found himself in possession of Samos; and wishing to be "the justest of men," set up an altar to the god of Freedom, stipulating only that he should be appointed its high-priest as a condition of his establishing democracy. Finding, however, that the "Irreconcilables" of the period intended to prosecute him for embezzlement, he had repented of his republican generosity, and made himself master of the citadel and city. Darius now sent out an expedition which put his friend Syloson in possession of the island, but not without an insurrection, which led to a terrible massacre of the people.

Babylon, according to the Behistun inscription, revolted from Darius twice—once in the first and again in the fourth year of his reign. It is difficult to identify with either of these occasions the revolt now mentioned by Herodotus. According to his account—which in this instance must be regarded rather as romance than history—so determined was the attempt, that the Babylonians strangled most of their women, in order to reduce their population, in preparation for the expected siege. Darius soon sat down before the city, but the walls defied his utmost power; and the besieged began to jeer the Persians, telling them that "they would never take the city until mules foaled." However, in the twentieth month of the siege, a mule belonging to Zopyrus, a Persian of rank, did foal—an event perhaps not physically impossible; and Zopyrus thought that there must have been something providential in the taunt of the Babylonians, and that now the city might be taken. The sequel, whether true or not in an historical sense, is singu-

larly illustrative of the chivalrous self-devotion of the Persian nobility in the interests of their monarch. Zopyrus proceeded to cut off his own nose and ears, clipped his hair close, got himself scourged, and in that state presented himself to Darius, and laid his plan before him.\* Darius was greatly shocked at his retainer's maltreatment of himself, but as it was too late to mend the matter, made the proposed arrangement. Zopyrus was to pretend to desert to the Babylonians, telling them that Darius had so ill-used him, because he had advised him to raise the siege. The Babylonians would probably believe him, and intrust him with the command of a division. Darius must then be willing to sacrifice a few thousands of his worst soldiers to give the Babylonians confidence in Zopyrus, who, when he had the game safe in his hands, would open the gates to the Persian army. All turned out according to the programme. Zopyrus admitted the Persians, who took the city. Darius did his best to destroy the formidable walls, and had three thousand of the leading rebels impaled; but, not wishing to depopulate the city, procured from the neighboring nations fifty thousand women to make up for those whom the Babylonians had sacrificed. As for Zopyrus, the king loaded him with honors and made him governor of Babylon; but he was wont to say—more scrupulous than Henry IV. of France, who changed his religion to procure the surrender of the capital, thinking Paris "well worth a mass,"—that he would rather have Zopyrus un mutilated than be master of twenty Babylons.

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\* The town of Gabii, according to Livy, was taken by the Romans by a very similar stratagem.

## CHAPTER VI.

## SCYTHIA.

" They dwell  
In wattled sheds on rolling cars aloft,  
Accoutered with far-striking archery."  
—ÆSCHYLUS, "Prometheus."

HAVING disposed of Babylon, Darius next bethought himself of the Scythians. He had an old national grudge against this restless race, for having overrun Asia in the days of Cyaxares the Mede. The Behistun inscription only mentions the quelling of a revolt of the Sacæ, or Scythian subjects of Persia; but Herodotus speaks of an expedition on a vast scale against the independent nation.

The Scythians were, according to Herodotus, a people whose seat was in the steppes of northern Russia, more widely spread than the present Cossacks of the Don, but without any definite boundaries, sometimes encroaching on their neighbors and sometimes encroached upon by them, like the Tartar hordes at this day. Their name has been supposed by some to be a synonym for "archers." Their habits were very like those of the terrible Huns and Magyars who overran part of Europe in the last agonies of Rome and afterwards; but the difficulty of identifying a modern and civilized race with an ancient and barbarous one, is shown by the dissimilarity of the handsome and chivalrous Hungarians with their hideous and unkempt progenitors. They seem to have inherited from them little besides their love of horseflesh—in the civilized sense.

That the Scythians disappeared from history, when history itself was at its lowest ebb, is no proof that they exist nowhere now. Their language, specimens of which are given by Herodotus, undoubtedly belongs to that of the Indo-Germanic family. Their connection with the Sacæ is established. Some connect the Sacæ with the Saxons, others also with the Sikhs of northern India. It would indeed be strange if it were discovered from critical philology and archæology that the English were pitted against their cousins at Sobraon, Chilianwallah, and Gujerat, and recovered India through their aid afterwards; and that some of our Saxon ancestors were those who fought best on the losing side at Marathon and Plataea. Certain it is that nearly all the now dominant races of mankind seem to have swarmed, at longer or shorter intervals, from some mysterious hive about or beyond the Caucasus. History records some of the waves of their western or eastern progress. Before the Scythians came a swarm of Cimmerians, sweeping over Asia Minor in the time of the predecessors of Croesus. Their name is still retained in the Crimea and Krim Tartary. They reappear as Cimbri in the latter days of the Roman republic, to which they were very near giving the finishing stroke. Then they are heard of in Schleswick, and Jutland, and in Wales it is just possible that at the present day they call themselves Cymry. Before their coming a horde of Celts or Gauls had fallen on Rome, and another invaded Greece later on, leaving permanent settlements in Lombardy and Asia Minor.

In earlier history these tidal waves of population came at long intervals, so that the damage they did was reparable, and the silt they left behind them only strengthened the ground; but in the latter days of the

Roman Cæsars, they succeeded one another so quickly that the Empire was swamped, and when the disturbance had subsided, the earth wore a face that was strange and new. The repentant sons of those savage children of the night, calling themselves English, French, Germans, and so forth, are now endeavoring to atone for their fathers' delinquencies by painfully diving after the relics of lost civilizations, and preserving whatever they can find with religious veneration for the use and delight of ages to come. By degrees we are opening up Greece, Italy, Assyria, Persia, India, Egypt, and discovering to our dismay that much of our boasted civilization is but a parody on what prevailed centuries or millenniums ago; and that, with all our culture, we have still much barbarism to unlearn.

The Scythians described by Herodotus, like the Parthians who defeated the Roman legions, are a race of archers on horseback. From them the Greeks may have derived their fables of the Centaurs. As a pastoral people, they were generally averse to the tillage of land, and moved about with their herds from one feeding-ground to another, carrying their skin-covered huts on carts. That the Sarmatians were allied with them appears from the fable which traces their descent to the union of Scythians with Amazons, those wonderful viragoes whose manlike habits are still kept up by the women of some Tartar tribes.

To account for the origin of the Scythians, Herodotus gives two fables. According to one, a certain Targitæus, a son of Jupiter, and grandson by his mother's side, of the river Borysthenes or Dnieper, was the first man in Scythia. He had three sons. At first they were all equal, when there fell from heaven four implements of gold—a plow, a yoke, a battle-axe, and a goblet.



The eldest approached to take them, when they broke out into flames, and he durst not touch them. The second was rejected in like manner. The youngest fared better: he was able to handle the gold and to carry it off. This was a sign that he should be the king.\* From the three brothers sprang the three Scythian tribes—the “Royal” Scythians from the youngest. According to the other legend, which emanated from a Greek source,

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\* A somewhat similar story was told to Speke by Rumanika, king of Karagûd.

“Before their old father Dagara died, he had unwittingly said to the mother of Rogero, although he was the youngest born, ‘what a fine king he would make;’ and the mother in consequence tutored him to expect to succeed, although primogeniture is the law of the land, subject to the proviso, which was also the rule with the ancient Persians, that the heir must have been born after his father’s accession, which condition was here fulfilled in the case of all three brothers. . . . Rumanika maintained that Rogero was entirely in the wrong, not only because the law was against him, but the judgment of heaven also. On the death of the father, the three sons, who only could pretend to the crown, had a small mystic drum placed before them by the officers of state. It was only feather-weight in reality, but being loaded with charms, became too heavy for those not entitled to the crown to move. Neither of the other brothers could move it an inch, while Rumanika easily lifted it with his little finger. . . . He (Rumanika) moreover said that a new test had been invented in his case besides the ordeal of lifting the drum. The supposed rightful heir had to plant himself on a certain spot, when the land on which he stood would rise up like a telescope drawn out till it reached the skies. If he was entitled to the throne, it would then let him down again without harm; but if otherwise, collapse and dash him to pieces. Of course as he survived the trial, it was successful. On another occasion a piece of iron was found in the ground, about the shape and size of a carrot. This iron could not be extracted by any one but Rumanika himself, who pulled it up with the greatest ease.”—“Lake Victoria;” a compilation from the Memoirs of Captains Speke and Grant.

Hercules, when he was carrying off the cattle of Geryon (who lived on an island near Cadiz in Spain), came to Scythia, and being overcome by frost and fatigue, wrapped himself in his lion's skin, and fell asleep. When he awoke his team of mares had disappeared. He wandered in quest of them till he came to a country called the Bush. Here he found in a cave a strange being, half woman, half serpent, who detained him with her by holding out hopes of his recovering his mares, which she had caught and hidden.\* Three sons were the re-

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\* These legends of serpent-women are not uncommon in German mythology. The following adventure is related by the brothers Grimm; "One Leonhard, who was a stammerer, but a good fellow, and of irreproachable morals, lost his way one day as he was visiting some underground vaults of the nature of catacombs. All at once he found himself in a delicious meadow, in the midst of which was playing a young girl, half concealed by the herbage. She invited him to come and rest by her side. Leonhard, out of pure politeness, obeyed her eagerly, and then became aware of a fact which the long grass had at first prevented his observing,—that the damsel, the upper part of whose body was white and beautiful, terminated below in a scaly and serpent-like tail. He wished to fly, but his legs were immediately caught and embraced by her tail. Thus forced to listen, he now heard the poor creature's history. She was born a princess, and was enjoying court society, when a malicious enchanter charmed her into her present state, from which she could only be released on one condition, and that was, that she could prevail on some fair young man, who must be perfectly innocent, to give her three kisses. The youth must not be older than twenty-two. There was time for Leonhard to have fulfilled the conditions, for he would be twenty-three on that very day—in two hours more. But, unfortunately, he stammered, and the two hours were almost gone before he had made the necessary preliminary statement as to his birth. Then he gave her the first kiss. Upon that she was seized with violent convulsions, and rolled so wildly on the grass that he fled in alarm. He was, however, recalled by her supplications and promises, and gave her the second kiss. The effect

sult of this strange intimacy—one called Agathyrus, the other Gelonus, the other Scythes. Hercules, on his departure, left with the mother a bow, and a belt with a goblet attached to it. The son who could bend the bow was to inherit the land, the others to emigrate. Scythes, the youngest, bent the bow, and remained to be the father of the kings of Scythia, which accounted for the Scythian custom of wearing a goblet attached to the girdle.

In describing the geography of Scythia, of which Herodotus probably knew no more than he may have heard at the Greek factory at Olbia (near the site of the modern Kinburn), he is carried away by the interest of his subject, and launches out into a geographical digression, chiefly entertaining as a record of ancient notions, and as showing how facts become altered in passing from mouth to mouth. The "Scythia" of Herodotus seems to embrace "the basins of the Dön, Dnieper, Dniester, and Boug, and the northern half of that of the Lower Danube"—*i.e.*, a great portion of Russia, Besarabia, Wallachia, and Moldavia. He tells strange stories of the tribes who dwelt around Scythia, as far as the uttermost parts of Europe. The Issedonians and the

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of this was still more electric than that of the first. Her eyes burned like fire, she sprang up, her face glowed and her cheeks seemed bursting; she whirled about like a demoniac, and hissed, shrieked, and yelled like a very Melusina. Frightened out of his wits, the youth rushed away through the meadow and catacombs till the hideous object was out of sight; but after a time, reflecting that he might have made his fortune and married a princess, he turned to go back once more. It was too late; for, to his unspeakable chagrin, he just then heard a village clock strike twelve, which made him twenty-three years of age.—X. R. Saintine, "*La Mythologie du Rhin*" (free translation).

\* Heeren.

Androphagi were given to cannibalism; the former, like the Callatian Indians, feasting on their fathers, and keeping their skulls set in gold as heirlooms. This custom was, however, balanced with another, which would place them, as some might think now, in the van of progress—they gave women equal rights with men. The Neuri were said to change into wolves periodically; a tradition which still survives in the “wehr-wolf” of the Germans, and the “loup-garou” of the French. Livingstone relates that there were men in the country above the Zambesi who were supposed to become lions for a term, and that the souls of great captains were thought to pass into the king of beasts. But perhaps the story rose out of the fact that the Neuri wore wolf-skins in winter. There were people in the extreme north who slept six months in the year (Herodotus's informant may have said that there was night for six months), and who had goat's feet—that is, they may have worn moccasins. These may have suggested the Satyrs of the Greeks. A common superstition also placed a wonderfully good and happy people behind the region of the north wind, called Hyperboreans. So the “blameless” Ethiopians were supposed to inhabit the extreme south. The Greeks believed in goodness when a very long way from home.

Our author mentions slightly, and with some disdain, the legend (known also to other writers) of one of these Hyperboreans, Abaris, who was said to have been even a greater traveler than himself—who “walked round the world with an arrow, without once eating.” But whatever may be thought of the latter part of the story, it seems highly probable that in Abaris's “arrow” we have a dim tradition of the magnetic needle. Its properties were certainly known to the

Chinese long before Herodotus's date, and some rumor of the marvel might have reached Europe. The story tempts Herodotus into speculative cosmography. He is dissatisfied with the map of Hecatæus, who divided the habitable world into two equal portions, Europe and Asia, making it like a medal, with the great river of Occan for a rim; not that he himself at all suspected the world of being a sphere, like some of the later ancients, but that he thought the distribution of the continents manifestly unsound.

If Herodotus had been in the habit of rejecting every tale that he did not believe, like some later writers, we should have lost the valuable passage which seems to prove that Africa was circumnavigated twenty-one centuries before the time of Diaz and Vasco de Gama. Pharaoh Necho, after giving up the Suez Canal as hopeless, sent a fleet of Phœnician ships down the Red Sea, ordering them to return to Egypt by the pillars of Hercules—that is, by the Strait of Gibraltar. As these were their orders, it is to be presumed that the route was already known. They spent three years in accomplishing their task, as they had to sow grain on the way, and wait for the harvest. Herodotus pronounces their voyage apocryphal, because they reported they had the sunrise on their right hand as they sailed round Libya, but which proves indeed that they had doubled the Cape of Good Hope. Sataspes, a Persian, tried to sail round Africa in the other direction, but failed. He had got beyond Cape Solocis (Spartel) to a country inhabited by a dwarfish people, who dressed in palm-leaves; and there, as he declared, the ship stopped, and would go no further. He had evidently fallen in with the southerly trade-wind, and was not aware that, in order to proceed, he ought to have

pushed across towards the South American continent. He met with a fate worse even than that of some later discoverers: he was not only disbelieved, but put to death on his return. Darius appears to have taken a great interest in such discoveries, and it was he who sent Scylax the Carian down the Indus to explore the Indian Ocean.\*

Among the strange customs which Herodotus records of the Scythians was their manner of keeping the anniversary of the burial of their kings. They slew fifty young men and fifty choice horses, stuffed the bodies of both, and set them up round the tomb in a circle, the men mounted on the horses, a ghastly body-guard for the royal ghost. Their great deity was the god of war, whom they worshiped under the shape of a scimitar. The Russian or Turkish vapor-bath would appear to have been another of their institutions; but Herodotus seems to confuse it with the process of intoxication by hemp-seed, which was known in early times. They were also distinguished by drunkenness and dislike of foreigners, like some of their supposed descendants, who are not yet cured of these weaknesses.

Against this nation Darius is said by Herodotus to have moved a vast army, bridging over the Thracian Bosphorus and the Danube with boats, and taking with him the Ionian fleet, to the custody of whose commanders he committed the bridge over the river, while he passed on into the northern wildernesses. The

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\* This Scylax, or more probably a later writer who traded on his name, brought home some remarkable travelers' stories. He described an Indian tribe whose feet were so large that they used them as parasols, and another whose ears were so capacious that they slept in them.—See Rawlinson, I. p. 50, note.



Scythians retreated before him towards the Tanais or Don. Then they led him such a long chase that at last his patience was worn out, and he sent to their king to demand that, as a man of honor, he should either stand and fight, or deliver earth and water in token of submission. The Scythian replied that he would soon send him some presents more to the purpose. These arrived in due course of time—a bird, a mouse, a frog, and five arrows. Darius at first thought that this signified a tender of homage; but Gobryas, one of the Seven, who had an older head, read the hieroglyphic letter as follows: “Unless you can fly like a bird, or burrow like a mouse, or swim like a frog, you will not escape the Scythian arrows.” Darius took the hint and retreated. But Scythian horsemen had reached his bridge before him, and tried to prevail on the Ionians to destroy it. Miltiades the Athenian, now tyrant of the Chersonese (of whom we shall hear again), called upon his fellow-Greeks to strike, once for all, a blow for freedom; to cut the bridge, and leave their Persian masters to perish. But he was overruled in the interest of Darius by Histiaëus of Miletus, and the Persian army returned without irretrievable loss from its military promenade in pursuit of the impalpable Scythians. Megabazus remained behind to reduce the Thracian tribes in the neighborhood of the Hellespont.

This leads our author to discuss the ethnology of Thrace. It appeared to him that if its numerous tribes had been only united, they would have been a match for any existing nation. His Thrace must nearly have comprehended the present limits of Roumelia, Bulgaria, Servia, Moldavia, and Wallachia. The Getæ or Goths, who were subdued by Darius on his way to

Scythia, believed that when they died they went to a good spirit named Zalmoxis, to whom they sent a messenger every five years; that is, they sacrificed a man by tossing him in the air and catching him on points of lances. Another tribe, when a child was born, sat round him, bewailing the miseries he would have to undergo; while in a case of death they made a jubilee of the funeral, believing the departed to have attained everlasting happiness. The same belief was connected with a custom in another tribe corresponding to the "Suttee" of the Hindoos. When a man died there was a sharp contention among his widows which was the worthiest to be slain over his grave, and the surviving wives considered themselves as in disgrace. They marked high birth by tattooing, like the South Sea Islanders; and thought idleness, war, and plunder honorable, but agriculture mean. The nation in general worshiped only the gods of battle, of wine, and of the chase. But the kings paid especial honor to a god corresponding to Hermes or Mercury, or the German Woden. Less was known of the tribes north of the Danube. The Sigynnæ wore a dress like that of the Medes, and possessed a breed of active, hardy, shaggy ponies, the description of which answers to those of the Shetland Islands. Or possibly some vague rumor of the harnessed dogs of Kamtchatka may have reached the ears of our author. He does not think that the Thracians could have been correct in saying that a tract of country beyond the Danube was so infested with bees as to be uninhabitable, as bees cannot bear much cold. They may have meant mosquitoes.

Megabazus was now commissioned to transport bodily to Persia the whole tribe of the Pæonians, who lived to the north of Macedonia, of whose industry Darius

had conceived an exaggerated notion, by seeing one of their women at Sardis bearing a pitcher on her head, leading a horse, and spinning flax all at the same time. He effected this task with no great difficulty; but other tribes resisted his arms with success, and especially those who inhabited the Lake Prasias. These must have been a relic of the most ancient population of Europe. Their habits were precisely the same as those of the singular people whose whole manner of life has been brought to light by the discovery of ancient piles in the lakes of Zurich in Switzerland, and who appear to have inhabited nearly all the comparatively shallow lakes that have hitherto been examined. This pile-city of Prasias is thus described:

“Platforms supported on tall piles were fixed in the midst of the lake, approached from the land by a single narrow bridge. Originally all the citizens in common drove the piles for the platform, but afterwards every man drove three piles for every wife he married, and they had each several wives. Each man had his own hut on the platform, and his trap-door opening through the scaffolding on the lake below. They tied the little children by the leg to prevent their rolling into the water.” (The proportionate number of children’s bones found in the Swiss lakes would argue that this custom was but negligently observed in those regions.) “They fed their horses and other cattle upon fish, of which there was such an abundance that they had only to let down a basket through the trap-door into the water, and draw it up full.”

What was the ultimate fate of this amphibious colony we do not learn; but very many of the corresponding settlements in central Europe bear traces of having been destroyed by fire. For the present these

lake-people were impregnable, and Megabazus turned his attention to Macedonia, sending first to the court of King Amyntas an embassy of seven noble Persians to demand earth and water. Amyntas entertained them at a feast; but when their attentions to the ladies of the court began to be offensive, his son Alexander, indignant at the insult, dressed up some Macedonian youths to personate the ladies, whom he had managed to withdraw under promise of their return, and assassinated the Persian envoys when heavy with wine. An expedition was afterwards sent to inquire after their fate, but Alexander conciliated the commander with hush-money and the hand of his sister in marriage. The royal family of Macedonia were of Argive origin, according to Herodotus; otherwise, he says they would not have been allowed to contend at the Olympic games. This Greek descent was used subsequently by Philip of Macedon as a plea for his intervention in the affairs of Greece.

A casual notice of the founding of Cyrene leads Herodotus into Libya, whither we have no space to follow him. He touches on the known north African tribes, and glances at the unknown, relating many marvelous stories; in fact, his love for anthropology and geography makes him seize any excuse for imparting information. He well-nigh exhausts the world as known to the ancients, and might have wept, as Alexander did that he had no more worlds to conquer, that he had no more to describe. Of one remote and apocryphal region he confesses he knew nothing. He was not sure that the islands called the Cassiterides ("Tin-Islands") had any real existence; but he had been told that tin came "from the ends of the earth." Such is the sole notice which the great traveler has left of us

or our ancestors; for it is probable that the Cassiterides were the coast of Cornwall.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE TYRANTS OF GREECE.

“If gods will not misfortune send,  
List to the counsel of a friend:  
Call on thyself calamity;  
And that, from all thy treasures bright,  
In which thy heart takes most delight,  
Commit forthwith to deepest sea.”

—SCHILLER, “Ring of Polycrates.”

THE original constitution of most of the Greek States was a limited monarchy, though the king was emphatically “hedged by divinity,” since the founder of his family was generally supposed to be a god. In time, as the royal prestige wore out, this constitution was generally superseded by an oligarchy, which lasted until some ambitious individual, by courting the unprivileged classes, managed to raise himself to the supremacy.

In the fifth century before Christ there were so many of these usurpers at the same time in Greece, that it has been called the Age of Tyrants. Mr. Grote prefers to call them “despots;” but the name matters little if no sinister meaning is necessarily attached to the word Tyrant. Their number at one time was a fact in support of those who believe in social and political epidemics. One of the most famous of them was Polycrates of Samos. He was great in arms and arts, and the poet Anacreon was the companion of his

revels, just as Goethe enjoyed his Rhenish with Charles Augustus, the jolly Grand-Duke of Weimar. His prosperity was so perfect, that his friend King Amasis of Egypt, as a prudent man, thought it his duty to give him a solemn warning, and advised him to avert the anger of the gods by sacrificing some object which he held very precious. Polycrates chose out of his abundant treasures a favorite emerald ring, which he at once threw into the sea. Five or six days afterwards, a poor fisherman caught so magnificent a fish that it struck him that it was only fit to set before a king. To Polycrates, therefore, he presented it, with many compliments. The tyrant, with his usual geniality, made it a condition that the fisherman would come and help him to eat it. He bashfully accepted the honor. When the fish was served, behold! the emerald ring was there in its inside. The servants were exceedingly glad that the king's lost ring was found—possibly they had been charging each other with stealing it; but Polycrates looked serious, for he felt that the gods had rejected his offering. He thought it right to inform his friend Amasis of the result. Amasis, with less generosity than foresight, at once sent a herald to Samos to renounce the alliance of Polycrates, as he felt sure that the god had decreed his ruin, and did not wish to be himself involved in it. The tale of the fisherman and the ring has been transferred to Arabian fable.

Fortune still continued to smile on Polycrates, and he overcame all his enemies by force or fraud. Some Samians, whom he had driven out, managed to set on foot against him an expedition from Lacedæmon. The visit of these people to Sparta is characteristically told. They made a long speech there in the assembly, which they would have hardly done if they had known the



Spartan temper better. The authorities made reply that they had forgotten the first half of their discourse, and could not understand the second. The Samians then held up an empty bag, merely remarking, "The bag wants flour." The Spartans said that the word "bag" was quite unnecessary—the gesture was enough. However, they sent a force to Samos to support the exiles; and Polycrates is said to have bribed them to return with leaden money gilt over. The existence of the story is singularly illustrative of the avarice as well as the gullibility of this people.

But the doom of Polycrates could only be deferred. Towards the end of the reign of Cambyses he was unfortunate enough to excite the cupidity of Orætes, the Persian satrap of Sardis, who proceeded to set a trap for him. Orætes said that he feared the covetousness of Cambyses, and offered to deposit all his treasure with Polycrates. The latter sent his secretary to inspect it, who was shown some large chests full of stones, just covered with gold. Satisfied with this report, in spite of all the warnings of his daughter, Polycrates started for the court of Orætes to fetch the treasure. The satrap at once arrested him, put him to a cruel death, and then impaled his dead body. But the murderer afterwards came to a violent end himself in the reign of Darius.

Another specimen of a tyrant, and this, too, in our common acceptation of the word, was Periander of Corinth, the son of Cypselus. By his origin he was partly patrician and partly plebeian. At one time the government of Corinth was in the hands of a single family called the Bacchiadæ, who only intermarried with one another. But one of them happened to have a daughter called, from her lameness, Labda (from the

Greek letter *A* (L), which originally had one leg shorter than the other), whom her parents were, on this account, obliged to marry out of the family to one Aëtion, a man of the people. In consequence of oracles which boded ill to Corinth from a son of Aëtion, the rulers sent ten of their number to dispatch the infant as soon as he was born. When they came and asked to see the child, Labda showed it them, thinking their visit was only complimentary. They had agreed that whoever took the child first in his arms should dash it on the ground. Providentially, however, the babe smiled in the man's face who had taken him, so that he had no heart to kill it, but passed it on to his neighbor, and he to another, and so it went through all the ten. When the mother had carried the child indoors again, she overheard the party outside loudly reproaching one another with their faint-heartedness in not making away with it. Fearing from this that they would return, she hid the child away in a chest or corn-bin, so that when they re-entered they could not find him. From this escape he was called Cypselus or "Bin." When he grew up he made himself despot of Corinth, and ruled harshly, visiting the citizens with confiscations, banishment, and death. He reigned thirty years, and then his son Periander succeeded him, who, at first, was a mild ruler, until he sent to Thrasybulus, despot of Miletus, to ask him the best way of governing his people. Thrasybulus took the Corinthian herald forth into the fields, and as he passed through the corn, still questioning him about Corinthian affairs, he snapped off and threw away all the ears that overtopped the rest. He walked through the whole field doing this, till the damage was considerable. After this he dismissed his visitor without a word of advice. When the messenger

returned to Periander, he said that he had been sent on a fool's errand to a madman, who gave him no answer, but only walked through a field spoiling his wheat by plucking off all the longest ears.\* Periander said nothing; but he understood the meaning of Thrasybulus, which was, that he was to govern by cutting off all the foremost citizens. After this he became a much worse tyrant than his father, and finished the work which he had begun. On one occasion he stripped all the women of Corinth of their clothes. Having sent to consult an oracle of the dead † about some lost property, the shade of his wife Melissa (whom he had put to death) appeared to him, and said that she was cold, and had literally nothing to put on; for the robes buried with her were of no use, since they had not been burnt. So he made proclamation that all the matrons should go to the temple of Juno in full dress, and there having surrounded them with his guards, took all their clothes from them, and burnt them as an offering to his dead queen.

The relations of Periander with his younger son Lycophron form one of the most touching episodes in Herodotus. The lad had learnt the fact of his mother's murder, and from that time would neither speak to his father nor answer him. The father at last banished him from his house. He even sent warning to the friends with whom his son took refuge that all who

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\* The English reader will remember the words of the gardener in Shakespeare:

“Go thou, and like an executioner,  
Cut off the heads of too fast-growing sprays,  
That look too lofty in our commonwealth.”

—“Richard II.,” Act. iii. sc. 4.

† Hence the word “necromancy.” The parallel of Saul, the witch of Endor, and the ghost of Samuel, is at once suggested.

harbored him did so at their peril—nay, that any who even spoke to him should pay a fine to Apollo. The lad wandered miserably from one to the other, and at last was found lying in the public porticoes. Then Periander himself went to him, and upbraided him with his folly in depriving himself by his obstinacy of a princely home. Lycophron only answered by reminding his father that he had now himself incurred the forfeit to the god. Periander saw that the case was hopeless, and sent him to Corcyra for safe keeping. But when he found himself growing old, and unequal to the cares of government, and saw that his elder son was quite incompetent, he sent to offer to resign in Lycophron's favor. No reply came. Then the father sent his favorite sister to treat with him, and try to soften his heart. Lycophron's answer was that he would never set foot again in Samos while his father lived. Periander humbled himself so far as to offer to retire himself to Corcyra, and allowed the son to take his place. To this Lycophron agreed; on hearing which the people of Corcyra murdered him, in dread of receiving as their master the terrible Periander.

A pleasanter story in connection with him will be best told, as nearly as may be, in the old historian's own words, with a little retrenchment of his diffuseness.

#### ARION AND THE DOLPHIN.

In Periander's days there lived a minstrel of Lesbos, Arion by name, who was second to none as a player on the lute. This Arion, who spent most of his time with Periander, sailed to Italy and Sicily, and having earned by his minstrelsy great store of treasure, hired a Corinthian ship to go back to Corinth—for whom should he trust rather than the Corinthians, whom he knew so

well. When the crew were out at sea, they took counsel together to throw Arion overboard, and keep his treasure. But he divined their intent, and besought them to take his money, but spare his life. But the shipmen refused, and bade him either straightway kill himself on board, so that he might be buried on shore, or leap into the sea of his own free will. Then Arion, being in a sore strait, begged, since it must be so, that he might don his vestments, and sing one strain standing on the quarterdeck; and when he had ended his song he promised to dispatch himself. [He asked to put on his sacred garb, knowing that thereby he should gain the protection of Apollo.] The seamen consented, as well pleased once more to hear the master of all singers, and made space to hear him, withdrawing into the midship; and he chanted a lively air, and then plunged overboard, all as he was. So they sailed away to Corinth, and thought no more of Arion. But, lo! a dolphin took the minstrel up on his back, and landed him safely at the promontory of Tænarus in Laconia, whence he made his way to Corinth, all in his sacred robes, and told there all that had befallen him. But Periander did not believe him, and kept him under guard. At last the shipmen came, and when Periander asked them what had become of Arion, they said they had left him safe and sound at Tarentum, in Italy. Then Periander produced Arion in his vestments, just as he was when he leaped overboard, and they were struck dumb, and could deny their guilt no more. And Arion set up as a thank-offering to the god, an effigy of a man riding on a dolphin.

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Such is the legend given by Herodotus. Another version makes Apollo appear to Arion in a dream,

assuring him of succor before he leaped overboard, and adds that, after landing, the bard neglected to put back again into the sea his preserver, who consequently perished, and was buried by the king of the country. When the sailors came, they were made to swear to the truth of their story on the dolphin's tomb, where Arion had been previously hid. When he suddenly appeared they confessed their guilt, and were punished by crucifixion, for the double crime of robbery with intent to murder, and perjury. Arion and his bearer afterwards became a constellation, by the will of Apollo, according to a later addition to the legend.

It is not impossible that the legend of Arion grew out of the group of the man on the dolphin, which may have been set up to commemorate the expedition which sailed from Laconia to found Tarentum, comprised of Dorian and Achæan Greeks; the dolphin, sacred to Neptune, symbolizing the Achæan element, and the minstrel loved of Apollo, the Dorian. The legend of Colston, the munificent Bristol merchant, whose anniversary is still celebrated at Bristol, is well known in the west of England. A ship in which he sailed was said to have sprung a leak, which was miraculously plugged by a self-sacrificing dolphin, and so the ship came home safe. Some rationalists have volunteered the prosaic explanation that Colston was saved and brought home in another vessel called the Dolphin. One of the charitable societies formed in his honor bears the name of the "Dolphin." The sacred character of this fish (or rather cetacean) is doubtless of remote antiquity. He is the subject of a little poem (exquisite in the original) by Philip of Thessalonica.



## THE DOLPHIN AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

“ Blaming Boreas, o’er the sea I was flying slowly,  
For the wind of Trace to me is a thing unholy,  
When his back a dolphin showed, bending with devotion,  
And the child of ether rode on the child of ocean.  
I am that sweet-chanting bird whom the night doth smile at ;  
And like one that kept his word proved my dolphin pilot.  
As he glided onward still with his oarless rowing,  
With the lute within my bill I did cheer his going.  
Dolphins never ply for hire, but for love and glory,  
When the sons of song require ; trust Arion’s story.”

There is also a beautiful version of the legend by the Roman poet Ovid.

Cleisthenes of Sicyon was another eminent tyrant; and a magnificent man in every way. He had one beautiful daughter named Agariste, through whom despotism was fated to receive its death-blow in Athens. Like the Orsinis and Colonnas of medieval Rome, whose feuds gave Rienzi his opportunity to establish democracy, the patrician families of the Isagorids and Alcmaeonids strove for supremacy at Athens, and their strife gave birth to freedom. Herodotus gives a quaint account of the foundation of the great wealth of the latter family.

Alcmaeon, the son of Megacles, had assisted Cræsus in his negotiations with the Delphic oracle, and was invited in consequence to the court of Sardis. When he had arrived, Cræsus gave him leave to go into the treasury and take as much gold as he could carry away on his person at one time. So he put on the largest tunic he could find, so as to make a capacious fold, and the roomiest buskins. First he stowed his boots with gold dust, then he packed his clothes with it, then he powdered his hair with it, and lastly he took a mouthful of

it, and so came out of the treasury "dragging his legs with difficulty, and looking like anything rather than a human being, as his mouth was choked up, and everything about him was in a plethoric state." When Cræsus saw him he was highly amused, and gave him what he had taken and as much again. When Alcmaëon came home to Athens he found himself rich enough to enter as a competitor at the great Olympic games, and win the blue ribbon of that national festival—the four-horse chariot-race, which made the winner a hero in the eyes of his countrymen forever.

Two generations afterwards this family made a splendid marriage. Cleisthenes of Sicyon had added this to his renown, that he too had been a victor at Olympia. Under these circumstances he was not inclined to throw away a beauty and heiress like his daughter Agariste on the first comer, but, like the father in Goldoni's "*Matrimonio per Concorso*," he proclaimed that she should be wooed and won by public competition. He invited all the most eligible youths in Greece to come and spend a year at his court, promising to give his decision when it had elapsed; and he prepared an arena expressly for the purpose of testing their athletic proficiency. Among the suitors was the exquisite Smyndyrides of Sybaris, the most luxurious man of the most luxurious Hellenic city. It was he who was said to have complained of the crumpled rose-leaf on his couch, and to have fainted when he once saw a man hard at work in the fields. He would certainly have broken down in the athletic ordeal. Not so Males, the brother of Titormus, a kind of human gorilla of enormous strength who lived in the wilds of Ætolia; but he would scarcely have been polished enough as a son-in-law for Cleisthenes. And the father might be loath to intrust his daughter to the son

of Pheidon, the despot of Argos, a man notorious for rapacity and violence. The two Athenian candidates, Megacles son of Alcmaeon,\* and Hippocleides, a member of the great rival family, were probably the favorites from the first; for it is hard to imagine that there was no betting on an occasion so tempting to the sporting characters of antiquity. Cleisthenes having first ascertained that his guests could give satisfactory references, made proof of their manhood, their tempers, their accomplishments, and their tastes,—sometimes bringing them together, sometimes holding private conversations with each. Although gymnastics were very important, he seemed to have laid most stress on their qualities as diners-out. The man who at the end of the year seemed, in the opinion of all, to have the best chance, was Hippocleides, who indeed was connected with the royal Cypselids of Corinth, as well as an Athenian of the highest fashion. When the great day arrived for the suitors to know their fate, Cleisthenes sacrificed a hundred oxen, and gave a public feast, to which he invited not only the foreign suitors, but all his own people. After the feast there was one more trial in music and in rhetoric,—probably to see how the suitors could carry their wine. As the cup went round, Hippocleides, abashing the rest of the party by his assurance, called to the flute-player to strike up a dance. Then he danced, in a manner which gave perfect satisfaction to himself, though Cleisthenes began to look grave. Next he ordered a table to be brought in, mounted on it, and rehearsed certain Laconian and Attic figures.

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\* The son in this family took the grandfather's name; Megacles, Alcmaeon, Megacles, Alcmaeon, and so on. This was Alcmaeon II.

To crown all, he stood on his head and kicked his legs in the air. This last performance, which Hippocleides might perhaps have learned in his youth from the street-boys of the Piræus, was too much for Cleisthenes, who had long contained himself with difficulty. "Son of Tisander, thou hast danced away thy marriage," he exclaimed, in fierce disgust. The other quietly answered, "Hippocleides does not care!" from which "Hippocleides don't care" became a proverbial expression. Then, as Herodotus tells us, Cleisthenes rose and spoke to this effect:

"Gentlemen, suitors of my daughter,—I am well pleased with you all—so well pleased that, if it were possible, I would make you all my sons-in-law. But, as I have but one daughter, that is unfortunately impossible. You have all done me much honor in desiring the alliance of my house. In consideration of this, and of the inconvenience to which you have been put in wasting your valuable time at my court, I beg to present you with a talent of silver each. But to Megacles, the son of Alcmaëon, I betroth my daughter Agariste to be his wife according to the usage of Athens."

The issue of this marriage was Cleisthenes, the great Athenian reformer, who was named after his maternal grandfather.

Pisistratus, the despot of Athens, has been already mentioned as contemporary with Cræsus. He won immortality by digesting the poems of Homer into a consecutive whole,—settling, as it were, the canon of the Greek Scriptures. His rule was just and mild, until his enemies forced greater severity upon him in his latter days. He was succeeded by his son Hippias. An abortive attempt to assassinate this prince was made by two men bound together by the tie of romantic friendship peculiar to the Greeks, Harmodius and Aristogeiton.

This pair have always been celebrated as model patriots by the admirers of tyrannicide; but they bungled in their business by slaying the wrong brother, Hipparchus instead of Hippias, and only provoked Hippias to sterner measures of repression. At last the Alcmaeonids, growing weary of exile, made such strong interest with the god of Delphi that his oracle continually urged the Spartans to expel the Pisistratids. The clan, after a long struggle, were compelled to quit Athens, and retired to Sigeium, on the Hellespont, having selected this asylum as most convenient for intriguing with the Court of Persia for their restoration. They had ruled in Athens from B.C. 560 to B.C. 510, which was about the date of the expulsion of the kings from Rome. They traced their origin to Codrus and Melanthus, semi-mythical kings of Attica, and remotely to the Homeric Nestor of Pylos, after whose son Pisistratus the great ruler of Athens was named.

A festival song in honor of the famous tyrannicides was long the "Marseillaise" of republican Athens:

THE SWORD AND THE MYRTLE.

I'll wreath with myrtle-bough my sword,  
Like those who struck down Athens' lord,  
Our laws engrafting equal right on—  
Harmodius and Aristogeiton.

Harmodius dear, thou art not dead,  
But in the happy isles, they say,  
Where fleet Achilles lives for aye,  
And good Tydeides Diomed.

I'll wreath my sword with myrtle-bough,  
Like those who laid Hipparchus low,  
When on Athenè's holiday  
The tyrant wight they dared to slay.

Because they slew him, and because  
They gave to Athens equal laws,  
Eternal fame shall shed a light on  
Harmodius and Aristogeiton.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## IONIA.

"O for a tongue to curse the slave,  
Whose treason, like a deadly blight,  
Comes o'er the counsels of the brave,  
And blasts them in their hour of might!"  
—MOORE, "Fire-Worshippers."

DARIUS had not forgotten the good service done him by Histiaëus of Miletus, in preserving the Danube bridge for him on his hurried retreat from the Scythian expedition. He had given him a grant of land in Thrace, in a most desirable position for a new settlement. But he was afterwards persuaded that he had done wrong. A shrewd Greek would be tempted to form there the nucleus of an independent power. He therefore sent for Histiaëus, and detained him in an honorable captivity in his own court at Susa. And this detention led to the great Persian war.

There was a revolution in the little island of Naxos. "The men of substance," as they were literally called, were expelled, and came to Miletus begging Aristagoras, now deputy-governor in the absence of his father-in-law Histiaëus, to restore them. Thinking to get Naxos for himself, Aristagoras procured the aid of a Persian flotilla. On the way, a quarrel arose about a Greek captain whom Megabates, the Persian admiral, had punished, because he found no watch set on board his ship. The punishment consisted in binding him down so that his head protruded from one of the ports or rowlocks, and Aristagoras had taken upon himself



to release him. Megabates, in dudgeon, sent to warn the Naxians, who were to have been surprised, and the expedition failed. Then Aristagoras, finding himself unable to pay the expenses of the armament, as had been stipulated, thought of securing his position by the desperate expedient of stirring up a revolt at Miletus against Persia. He was confirmed in this resolution by the arrival of a singular courier from Histiaëus, who was determined at any cost to escape from the forced hospitalities of Susa. Histiaëus had taken a slave, shaved his head, punctured certain letters on the bare crown, then kept him till the hair was grown, and sent him to Aristagoras with merely the verbal message that he was to shave his head. When Aristagoras had played the barber, he found that the living dispatch bore the word "revolt."

His first step was to proclaim democracy throughout the Greek confederacy. The different despots were given up to their fellow-citizens, to be dealt with according to their deserts. It speaks strongly in favor of the character of their "tyranny" that nearly all were dismissed uninjured. One only—Coes of Mytilene—was stoned to death. Aristagoras then set sail for Sparta to seek for aid. That state at this time enjoyed the singular constitution of a double monarchy. This may have had some mythological connection with the legend of the twin sons of Leda, Castor and Pollux, who became sea-gods, from whom the constellation of the Gemini was named; but Herodotus assigns to it a different origin.

His tradition is that when the sons of Hercules reconquered their heritage of the Peloponnese, one of their three chiefs, Aristodemus, had the kingdom of Sparta

for his share. His wife gave birth to twins just before his death. The boys were much alike; and the mother, hoping that they might both be kings, protested that she did not know them apart. The Spartans were puzzled; and the Delphic oracle gave an answer which hardly mended the matter, except so far that it satisfied the mother.

“Let both be kings, but let the elder have more honor.”

But which was the elder? that was the question. At last it was suggested that a watch should be set to see which the mother washed and fed first. If she acted on system, the case was clear. The espionage succeeded; the elder was discovered, and named Eurysthenes, and the other Procles. The two brothers, when they grew up, were said to have been always at variance, and their separate lines continued so ever after. The two kings had peculiar duties, rights, and privileges, but lived in the same plain way as other citizens.

When Aristagoras arrived at Sparta, he was admitted to an audience with the senior king, Cleomenes. He showed him a bronze tablet engraved with a chart—the earliest known map of the world—pointed out where all the different nations lay, and conjured him to assist his kinsmen the Ionians; observing, that it was foolish for the Spartans to fritter away their force in local feuds, when they might be lords of Asia. As for the Persians, they were an easy prey—men who actually “went into battle with trowsers on.” Cleomenes promised to give him an answer in three days. At the second interview he asked “how far it was to Susa?” Aristagoras was unguarded enough to say, “a three months’ journey;” on which Cleomenes ordered him to

quit Sparta before sunset. Then he returned and sat before the king in the sacred guise of a suppliant, with an olive-bough in his hand. A little daughter of Cleomenes, named Gorgo, aged eight or nine, was standing at her father's side. The Milesian wished her to be sent away, but Cleomenes told him to say on, and not to heed the child. Then Aristagoras began by offering ten talents, and as the king shook his head, increased them by degrees to fifty. When this sum was mentioned, the child cried out: "Go away, father, or the strange man will be sure to bribe thee."\* The "conscience of the king" was moved. He withdrew to escape the temptation, and the mission of Aristagoras failed at Sparta.

At Athens he had better chances of success. Athens was in the heyday of her first freedom. She had rid herself of her tyrants, the Pisistratids, who were at this moment intriguing with Persia, not without success, for their restoration. The feelings of the citizens towards these powerful absentees and their Asiatic friends were much the same as those of the French of 1792 towards the Emigration and its abettors. The two great ruling families were now the rival houses of Alcmaeon and Isagoras. Cleisthenes the Alcmaeonid, grandson of the tyrant of Sicyon, might not have thought it worth his while to court the people, had he

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\* Gorgo was well worthy to become, as she afterwards did, the wife of Leonidas. An incident in her married life, subsequently related by Herodotus, seems to militate against the dictum of Aristotle that the Spartan women were inferior to the men. All the authorities of Sparta were puzzled by the arrival of a waxen tablet (the usual form of a dispatch) with nothing written on it. When Gorgo heard of it, she at once suggested that the wax should be scraped off, and the dispatch was found engraved on the wood.

not been determined to put down the rival faction which was led by Isagoras, brother of his father's rival Hippocleides, of dancing notoriety. As it was, he brought about a complete democratic revolution. He broke up the four old tribes, which were bound by family ties and sacred rites, and made ten new geographical divisions. This was as radical a change as the substitution of departments for provinces in France; and the introduction of the decimal system, in nearly every department of state at Athens, anticipated by more than two thousand years the work of the French Revolution. The Isagorids for a time turned the tables on the Alcmaeonids, by calling in the assistance of the Spartans, and Cleisthenes had only just defeated a dangerous confederacy against Athens. The Spartans had invaded Attica from Megara, when the Bœotians and Chalcidians broke in upon their northern frontier. But the usual jealousy between the two Spartan kings, and the defection of their Corinthian allies, dissolved the Spartan army, and left the Athenians at leisure to deal with their other enemies. They defeated the Bœotians with great slaughter, taking seven hundred prisoners; and crossing on the same day to Eubœa, there obtained a second victory over the Chalcidians, in whose lands they afterwards planted a military colony. The prisoners were ransomed, but their chains still hung in the citadel at Athens in the time of Herodotus on the walls blackened with Persian fire, and a handsome bronze quadriga stood by the gateway, which had been offered to Minerva from the tithe of the ransom. Its inscription was to this effect:

“Armies of nations twain, Bœotia banded with Chalcis,  
Sons of Athenian sires quelled in the labor of war.  
Slaking their ardent pride in a dismal fetter of iron—  
Then to the Maid for tithe gave we the chariot and four.”

The energy of Athens at this time struck Herodotus forcibly. It was like that of the French Jacobins when they had enemies on every frontier, and the Vendée and the Federals of the South on their hands besides. Great political changes give a nation a present sense of life and happiness, which is too often ultimately wrecked by selfishness, but which seems for a time to inspire superhuman strength. The worsted Thebans stirred up the little island of Ægina, which was always a thorn in the side of Athens till she had become mistress of the sea. There was a very old-standing feud about some sacred images or fetishes of olive-wood, representing the goddess Ceres and her daughter Persephone. No doubt their holiness was enhanced by their age and ugliness. Artistic beauty seems to have little to do with the sacredness of images, and in modern times in Italy an old black Madonna has been an object of peculiar veneration. The Zeus of Phidias and the Aphrodite of Praxiteles were not molded by the hands of Faith.

The Athenians had just refused a demand of the Persian satrap of Sardis for the restoration of their tyrant Hippias, when Aristagoras arrived. They received him with open arms, not only on account of this, but also because Miletus was their own colony; and dispatched twenty ships—probably all they could spare from the Æginetan war—to aid the Milesians in their struggle against the yoke of Persia. These were joined by five galleys from Eretria in Eubœa, that city being under an obligation to the Milesians. The crews left their ships on the shore near Ephesus, and marched on and surprised Sardis, shutting up the Persians in the citadel. But Sardis proved to them a miniature Moscow. The town, mainly built of wood and reeds, caught fire,

and the buccaneers, thought it best to retreat as soon as a sack became out of the question. But the Persian forces caught them up near Ephesus, and inflicted severe punishment before they could reach their ships. The Ionian Greeks were now left to themselves by the Athenians, but the insurrection assumed large proportions, involving the whole Greek seaboard of Asia, many inland tribes, and lastly spreading to the island of Cyprus.

When Darius heard of the great revolt, and especially of the burning of Sardis, his wrath was greatly kindled against the Athenians. He took a bow and shot towards heaven, saying, "O Zeus! grant that I may be avenged on the Athenians!" He also appointed a slave to say to him thrice every day during dinner, "O king! remember the Athenians." \* Then he sent for Histæus, telling him that he suspected he knew something about the business. But the Greek's innocent look and plausible words deceived the king, who was induced to send him to the coast—the very thing he had desired—to help to quell the insurrection. At Sardis Histæus found an astuter head to deal with. The satrap there was Artaphernes the king's brother. He said, "I see how it is, Histæus—thou hast stitched the shoe, and Aristagoras has put it on." But the adroit Ionian managed for the time to escape out of all his difficulties. He even outwitted Artaphernes so far, that, as Mr. Grote supposes, he got him to execute a number of innocent Persians at Sardis, by opening a treasonable correspondence with them. The Milesians, however, would not receive him

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\* There is a parallel symbolism in the case of Elisha and Joash (2 Kings xiii. 17): "Then Elisha said, Shoot; and he shot. And he said, The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria."



back as governor: he therefore persuaded the Lesbians to give him eight triremes, with which he took to piracy on his own account in the parts about the Hellespont. While marauding on the coast near Lesbos he was defeated by a Persian force which happened to be there, and his captors, fearing lest the good-natured Darius might pardon him, put him to death at Sardis. Their fears were well-founded; for when they sent his head to the king, Darius expressed much regret, and ordered it to be buried with all honor. This is quite consistent with the character of the Persian king as drawn by the prophet Daniel. It seems as if no one who had once done him a service could ever afterwards forfeit his good graces.

After reducing Cyprus, the Persians fell with their combined force on the Ionians and their allies. A victory won by the Greek fleet over the Phœnician sailors of Darius had no result of importance. The Carians fought most valiantly, and cut off a whole Persian division by an ambuscade. Though they lost in one battle ten thousand men, yet their spirit was unbroken. Miletus, too, still held out gallantly. If any man under these circumstances ought to have shown an example of self-devotion, that man was Aristagoras. But nerve is inconsistent with levity of character. It often happens that the coward runs into the jaws of his fate, and so it happened to him. He abandoned the Ionian cause, and with some of his partisans sailed away for his father-in-law's new settlement in Thrace, where he was killed while besieging some petty town. He had been just in time to make his fruitless escape, for the Persians now proceeded to invest Miletus by land and sea. The allied Greeks decided on leaving it to defend itself by land, and concentrating their fleet at a small island off the

coast. The allies counted in all three hundred and fifty triremes, which were confronted by six hundred in the service of Persia. The Persian commanders first tried to dissolve the hostile confederation by sending the deposed despots each to their own countrymen with promises of pardon on submission, and threats of extermination in case of prolonged resistance. The plan so far failed that it did not supersede the necessity of an action, for each separate state imagined itself the only one to which overtures were made. The Ionian captains, in their council of war, now agreed to put themselves all under the command of Dionysius of Phocæa. He set to work to put the ships in constant training, especially practicing a maneuver something like that of Nelson,—attacking the enemy's line in columns, and cutting through it. The invention of steam-rams seems likely to make the sea-fights of the future more like those of the remote past than ever. The incidents of the Merrimac's battle and of Lissa recall the collisions of ancient navies, only that the oars of the galleys are superseded by steam-engines. Their sails were not used in action, as they would have only embarrassed the rowers. To sweep away a whole broadside of oars by cleverly shaving the enemy, and then turn sharply and ram him home on the quarter, was doubtless a favorite evolution of the best sailors. Dionysius was too much of a martinet for the self-indulgent Ionians. He kept them at sea all night—an unheard-of innovation—and at drill all day, and the days were terribly hot. They had not bargained for this when they chose him admiral. They began to murmur. "What god have we offended that we should be thus victimized? What fools we were to give ourselves up body and soul to this Phocæan bully, who

commands but three ships of his own! We shall fall sick with the work and heat. The Persians can but make us slaves, and no slavery can well be worse than this. Let us mutiny." So they landed and encamped on the island, lolled in the shade all day, and refused to go on board any more. Then the Persian poison began to work. *Æacés*, the son of *Syloson*, lately tyrant of *Samos*, succeeded in persuading his countrymen to promise to desert, and they alone had sixty ships. Little could be hoped now from a general battle, but the battle took place. The *Samians* went off, all but eleven ships, whose staunch captains, like *Nelson* at *Copenhagen* with his blind eye to the telescope, would not see the signal of retreat. Most of the other allied squadrons, when they saw what the *Samians* were doing, imitated their bad example. The *Chian* contingent, with the *Samian* eleven and a few others, maintained a desperate struggle. The hundred *Chian* ships, each with forty picked marines on board, charged repeatedly through the enemy's line. When they had taken many of his galleys, and lost half their own, such as were able made their way to their own island. Their damaged ships made for *Mycalè*, where the crews ran them ashore and marched to *Ephesus*. But ill-fortune followed them. It was night, and the *Ephesians* were celebrating a feast, whose chief ceremony was a torch-light procession of women. Thinking them a party of freebooters come to carry off their wives and daughters, the citizens sallied out and cut them all to pieces. *Dionysius* the *Phocæan* had taken three ships, thus exactly doubling his own number. When he saw that the fight was lost, he made straight for the coast of *Phœnicia*, left undefended by the absence of their war-galleys, sank a number of merchantmen in the

harbors, and gained by this booty the means of setting up handsomely as a corsair in Sicily, where he plundered Carthaginians and Tyrrhenians, but—with “a refinement of delicacy very unusual,” as Mr. Rawlinson observes—let all Greek vessels go free.

The fall of Miletus soon followed the sea-fight. Most of the men were killed, and the women and children enslaved. The Athenians were deeply affected by the news, and when their poet Phrynichus brought on the stage his tragedy of the “Capture of Miletus,” the audience burst into tears, and he was fined a thousand drachmas (francs), and forbidden ever to exhibit it again. The revolt, which had now been desperately maintained for six years, was terribly expiated. The towns on the coast were as far as possible depopulated (the people being sent to the interior); and the islands were traversed by lines of soldiers, who “netted” the inhabitants from one side to the other. Cities and temples were burnt to the ground. The Chians had been warned of coming evil by terrible portents. Of a hundred youths sent to Delphi, all but two had died of a pestilence; and just before the great sea-fight off Miletus, the roof of a public school had fallen on the heads of the children of the principal citizens, and only one had escaped out of a hundred and twenty. In 1821 Europe was roused to sympathy for Greece by the horrors which this very island (Scio) suffered from the troops of the Capudan Pasha.

After a time the policy of the Persians changed towards Ionia, probably because Darius disapproved of the excessive severity which had been exercised; and Mardonius, his son-in-law, a young noble of great promise, was sent to depose once more the “tyrants,” and establish democracies. These rulers had proved

that they were not to be trusted. Having settled this business to the king's satisfaction, he was appointed to the command of a fleet and army whose destination was Athens and Eretria—for Darius had never forgotten their offense in the burning of Sarçis. But the ulterior object of the expedition was the subjugation of all Greece.

As the Persian fleet was doubling Mount Athos, a north wind sprang up which terribly shattered it. Little short of three hundred wrecks and twenty thousand corpses were cast away on the rocky promontory. Many fell victims, says Herodotus, to sea-monsters—one of the additional perils of the deep in the imagination of ancient mariners; those who could not swim were drowned—and those who could, died of cold. Mardonius himself received a wound in an action on the mainland of Thrace, and the expedition returned home with its commander invalided. Darius immediately made fresh preparations, and sent heralds to all the Greek states to demand earth and water, in order that he might know what support to expect. It is to be hoped that the Athenians and Spartans did not disgrace themselves by throwing one of the heralds into a well and the other into a pit, and telling them to fetch earth and water thence; but such is the story. Darius himself would under no provocation have so forgotten his knighthood. Some years afterwards, the Spartans were said to have sent two of their citizens, who voluntarily offered themselves, to Susa, as an atonement for this outrage, for which they believed that the wrath of the hero Talthybius, the patron of heralds, lay heavy on them; but Xerxes, who was then king, would not accept the sacrifice, and dismissed them unhurt.

The Æginetans gave the earth and water to Darius, probably to spite the Athenians, who at once denounced them to the Spartans (who were as yet considered the leaders of Greece) as traitors to the national cause. The Spartan king Cleomenes went to Ægina to arrest the most guilty parties; but his mission there was foiled by his brother-king Demaratus, who was accusing him at home. In retaliation, Cleomenes attempted to prove that Demaratus was illegitimate. His mother was the loveliest woman in Sparta. She had been ugly in her childhood, but was changed into a beauty by her nurse taking her daily to the temple of Helen. There a mysterious lady—"tall as the gods, and most divinely fair"—one day laid her hand on the child, whose looks from that time forth began to amend. In due time she had been married to a noble Spartan; but Ariston the king fell in love with her, and got her from her husband, who was his greatest friend, by a ruse. He proposed to exchange their most precious possessions, and they ratified the compact by an oath. Ariston straightway demanded his friend's wife. Thus taken off his guard, and bound by his oath, the husband unwillingly resigned her. But from circumstances connected with the birth of the child Demaratus, he was supposed by some to be not the son of Ariston, but of her former husband. Cleomenes found a powerful ally in Leotychides, the next heir, who was a deadly enemy of Demaratus, and the suit was carried on in his name. The inevitable oracle of Delphi was the last court of appeal; and the priestess, being bribed by Cleomenes, pronounced against Demaratus, who was then deposed, and ultimately driven from Sparta by the taunts of Leotychides. He made his way to that paradise of refugees, the hospitable court of Darius,



who gave him lands and cities. He had stood very high in the estimation of his countrymen, as having been the only Spartan who had won the four-horse chariot-race at Olympia.

When Cleomenes had thus worked his will on Demaratus, he took Leotychides, his new associate on the throne, with him to Ægina, where he arrested two of the principal citizens, as guilty of treason against the liberty of Greece, and deposited them as hostages with their bitter enemies the Athenians. But his own end was near. Rumor accused him of underhand practices against Demaratus, and he fled into Arcadia, where he began to hatch a conspiracy against Sparta. The Spartans in alarm called him home to his former honors. He had always been eccentric; he now became a maniac. He would dash his staff in the face of every citizen he met. At last his friends put him in the stocks—a wholesome instrument of restraint, as common there as in our own country within the last century. Finding himself alone one day with his keeper, he asked for a knife. The Helot did not dare to refuse the king, though a prisoner. Then he committed suicide in a manner which, though effected more clumsily, resembled the “Happy Dispatch,” of the Japanese.

The madness of Cleomenes, like that of Cambyzes, was generally supposed to have been a judgment on his impiety. Herodotus thought his treatment of Demaratus enough to account for it; but other charges equally grave were brought against him. He had bribed the Pythian priestess. He had roasted alive some fifty Argives who had taken refuge in a sacred grove during his invasion of Argolis, by burning the grove itself. He had scourged Argive priests for not allowing him, a foreigner, to sacrifice in the temple of

Juno. He had been in the habit of entering forbidden temples, and generally of making a parade of reckless irreligion. The Spartans themselves, however, gave a more naturalistic account of the cause of his madness. Certain Scythian ambassadors, who were staying at Sparta to negotiate a league against Darius, had induced the king to adopt the habit of taking his wine without water like themselves. "To drink like a Scythian" was a proverb. The case of Cambyses, as we have seen, admitted of the like explanation.

When Cleomenes was dead, the Æginetans sent to Sparta to complain of Leotychides about their hostages, who were still in custody with the Athenians. Leotychides, who was not popular, narrowly escaped being given up as a hostage in their stead; but, in the end, he was duly sent to Athens to demand their release. The Athenians refused to give them up, saying that as two kings had placed them there, they could not give them up to one. They certainly would have had the English law of trusteeship on their side. Leotychides, however, read them a striking lesson on the sacredness of trusts. He told them how one Glaucus, a Spartan, had once consulted the oracle at Delphi as to restoring a deposit of money to its rightful owner. He had the audacity to ask whether he might venture to purge himself by an oath, according to the Greek law, and so keep the money. The Pythoness gave answer in these warning words:

"O Glaucus, gold is good to win,  
And a false oath is easy sin;  
Swear—an thou wilt: death follows both  
The righteous and unrighteous oath:  
But Perjury breeds an awful Birth,  
That hath no name in heaven or earth;

Strong without hands, swift without feet,  
It tracks the pathway of deceit—  
Sweeps its whole household from the land;  
Only the just man's house shall stand."

When Glaucus heard these words, he at once restored the money, and sent to beg of the god that the thought of his heart might be forgiven him. The oracle replied that to tempt heaven with such a question was as bad as to commit the sin. "And now," said the Spartan king, "mark my words, men of Athens; at this day there is none of Glaucus' race left in Sparta; they have perished, root and branch."

The Athenians, however, turned a deaf ear to the solemn monition. In return for their stubbornness, the Æginetans laid wait for and captured the sacred galley which carried the Athenian embassy to Delos periodically, and threw the envoys (men of the highest rank) into prison. A fierce war of reprisals was entered upon, of which perhaps the most remarkable characteristic is the poverty of the Athenians of the period in ships. They were obliged to beg twenty galleys of their friends the Corinthians, who, as it was against the law to give them, generously sold the whole for a hundred drachmæ—about five francs apiece.

Leotychides might have served to point the moral of his own remarkable anecdote. He reaped little happiness from the successful plot by which he had supplanted Demaratus. After seeing his only son die before him, he ended his own days in exile, having been banished from Sparta for the disgraceful crime of taking bribes from the enemy during a war with the Thessalians. The evident satisfaction with which Herodotus, here as elsewhere, traces the course of retributive justice, is highly characteristic of the historian.

## CHAPTER IX.

## MARATHON.

"The flying Mede, his shaftless broken bow!  
The fiery Greek, his red pursuing spear!  
Mountains above, Earth's, Ocean's plain below!  
Such was the scene."

—BYRON, "Childe Harold."

As the first expedition against Greece under Mardonius had ended in disaster, Darius thought it best to let the young commander gain experience before he was intrusted with the conduct of another; possibly, also, his wound was long in healing. The second armada was put under the command of Datis, a Mede of mature years, and Artaphernes, nephew of the king. They had express orders to bring the Athenians and Eretrians into the royal presence in chains. The whole flotilla—six hundred war-ships, besides transports—struck straight across sea, through the Archipelago, not caring again to tempt the dangers of Athos. After sacking Naxos, they came to the sacred island of Delos, the birthplace of the twin deities Apollo and Diana. Fortunately for the inhabitants, the senior commander was a Median ritualist, not an iconoclast like Cambyses, and the sacred island was more than spared. Herodotus mentions an earthquake as occurring soon after this visit, and Thucydides another; and the story of the island having once floated about at large, before it became fixed, is doubtless connected with its volcanic origin. The Persian armament swept like a blight through the other islands, and soon appeared off the

coast of Eubœa. Meeting with no resistance on landing, they disembarked their cavalry, and laid siege to Eretria, which was betrayed to them after six days of severe fighting. The town was burnt and sacked, and the inhabitants carried away captive. They expected from the threats of Darius the worst of fates; but when they reached Susa, that forgiving monarch settled them peaceably at a place called Ardericca, where there was a famous well which produced salt, bitumen, and petroleum. Herodotus saw them there, and mentions particularly that they had not forgotten their Greek.

The Athenians, after the fall of Eretria, must have felt much as the Jews did when Sennacherib appeared before their walls, and Rabshakeh boasted that all the kings and gods on his march had fallen before him. But when they heard that the Persians had actually disembarked at Marathon, they must have felt as England would have felt had the news come that Bonaparte had landed in Pevensey Bay, close to the ominous field of Hastings. For Marathon had not as yet become a synonym for Victory; on the contrary, Pisistratus had beaten the Athenian commons on that plain, and his son Hippias was now with the Persian host in a temper which, they might be sure, had not improved with old age, exile, and disappointment.

It was Hippias, who, from old association, and thinking the plain well suited for cavalry maneuvers, had guided the Persians to the strand of Marathon (now Vrana). The plain itself is shaped somewhat like a thin crescent, the sea washing its concavity, and mountains rising behind its convex rim, which opens out at the back into two valleys. Between both a spur runs out, commanding the two gaps. The slope of this spur was the key of the Athenian position. The extent of

level ground is about six miles long, as measured by the curve of the bay, and about a mile and a half broad. But although along the whole of the six miles there is a fine sandy beach for landing, behind it, a considerable part—more than a third—of the crescent-plain is occupied by two swamps, one of which is of considerable extent. Here the Persian army awaited the mustering of the Athenians. Why they did not push on at once into the country is a mystery.

It so chanced that, just before the Persians came, a heaven-sent commander dropped, as it were, from the clouds into the fortunate city of Athens. The spirits of men rose when it was rumored that Miltiades, the son of Cimon, had come home. Herodotus gives us his family history, which was curious enough.

The Chersonese is a tongue of land jutting into the sea from the Thracian mainland. Its people being annoyed by the incursions of some savages to the north, as the Britons were by the Picts and Scots, sent a deputation to the oracle at Delphi to ask for advice. The god told them to choose as king the first man who should welcome them to his house. For some time they traversed almost hopelessly various parts of Greece; but Greek respectability was not likely to invite into its sanctuary a party of strangers "dressed in outlandish garments, and carrying long spears in their hands." At last in Attica they passed by the country-house of one Miltiades, son of Cypselus (a descendant of the hero of the "meal-bin").\* The democratic Tyranny had deprived him of occupation, for he was a nobleman of the old school, who came of "a four-horse family," says our historian—had won, indeed, the great Olympic race

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\* See p. 103.



himself—who traced his pedigree back to Ajax, and was connected with the proud Isagorids. So he sat idle in his porch, heartily sick of Pisistratus and democratic respectability. Seeing the foreign wayfarers pass, out of mere curiosity, as it would seem, he invited them into his house and entertained them. The interview was satisfactory; Miltiades consented to take out a few colonists with them to their wilds, and be their king. The first thing he did was to build them a kind of Hadrian's wall to keep back their Picts and Scots. His nephew, Stesagoras, the son of Cimon, succeeded him, and was succeeded, on his violent death, by his brother, this second Miltiades, who came out from Athens, and made himself by a *coup d'état* despot of the whole Chersonese—a great sin in the eyes of his democratic countrymen, who brought him to trial for it when he came to Athens, but condoned it on account of his services to the state. When the Persians in their march of vengeance, after the Ionian revolt, came to the Hellespont, he ran the gauntlet of their fleet successfully with five galleys; but he left in their hands one ship, on board of which was his son. As Miltiades had advised the king's bridge over the Danube to be destroyed, his captors thought, when they sent the youth to Darius, that he would punish the father in his person; but, with his usual magnanimity, the king gave him a house and estate, and a Persian wife, by whom he became the founder of a Persian family.

Miltiades, immediately on his return to Athens, was impeached by his democratic enemies for “tyranny” in his colony; but, having cleared his character, he was at once appointed one of the ten Athenian generals, of whom Callimachus, the polemarch, or minister of war, was another. They could not have been much more

than colonels, except on the days when they held the command in rotation; an arrangement which, to our English notions, would be fatal to the success of any great enterprise. The Athenians were as fond of decimals as the Persians of the number seven. A traditional 10,000 Athenians were engaged on the Greek side at Marathon. But the Greeks were apt to underestimate their own numbers and exaggerate those of the enemy. Supposing the Persian force to amount in all to 200,000 men, making deductions for the guard of the ships and the absent cavalry, they probably brought not many more than 110,000 into the field, of whom 30,000 were heavy-armed. The Athenian light-armed must also be reckoned, and if their whole force is put at 18,000, with 2000 Platæans, the odds still leave abundant room for Hellenic self-glorification. Before the Athenians left their city, they had sent to Sparta for succor. Their courier is said to have reached Sparta on foot—a distance of 140 English miles—on the second day. But the Spartans had an inveterate superstition against marching until the moon was full. They were possibly in no great hurry to help Athens, as when they did come, it was too late, and only with two thousand men. The Athenians had already drawn up their line of battle in the sacred close of Hercules, at Marathon, when they were joined by the Platæans. The Platæans had suffered much in time past from their neighbors the Thebans, and in return for substantial protection had bound themselves to Athens; in fact the little State became a satellite of the greater.

The Greek forces seem to have occupied the space between Mount Kotroni and Argaliki, resting their wings against the heights, which prevented their being outflanked. There was hesitation as to beginning

the attack. On the one hand, the Athenians rested on their own supplies, and could take their time; and the Spartan contingent, though tardy, might be expected to march in six days, when the moon would be at the full. On the other hand, treachery was feared from the party of Hippias in Athens, if there was any delay. The generals were equally divided, but Miltiades was for immediate action, and persuaded Callimachus to give his casting-vote with him. By what arrangement it happened is not clear, but it is certain that when the day for action came, the command was seen the hands of Miltiades. Why the attack was made upon the particular day it is difficult to determine. Some suppose that Miltiades, with an inspiration like that of Wellington at Salamanca, saw his advantage in a temporary absence of the Persian cavalry. Certain it is that no cavalry are heard of in the action, which seems singular, as Hippias is said to have chosen the spot for their benefit.\* The armies stood fronting each other. Callimachus was on the right wing, and the Plateans on the left. The right was always the post of honor and of danger, because the last man had his side unprotected by a shield. When the Greek line was formed, it appeared too short as compared with that of the Persians; so Miltiades, no doubt with some misgivings, drew troops from his center and massed them on the wings, in order that they might deploy when they came into the open. There was nearly a mile of ground to be cleared before arriving at the enemy's line; and it was

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\* Mr. Blakesley thinks that they had not yet been disembarked, but were still at Eretria; and perhaps it was for this reason that the Persians kept their position close to the shore for so long a time, and did not attempt to outflank by the hills an enemy numerically so inferior.

advisable to lose as few men as possible from arrows before coming to the thrust of spears. Miltiades therefore gave the signal to charge at quick step, which was increased to a run when within range. The Persians, on their side, prepared to give them a warm reception, though they thought the Greeks mad for charging so wildly, unsupported by archers or cavalry. But they had scarcely time for admiration of their enemies before they were in upon them. The two armies wrestled long and desperately before advantage declared itself for either. At last the swaying line of combat parted into three fragments, which moved in different directions. In the center, where the Persians and Sacæ were posted, the Athenians were rolled back, probably no farther than the slope of Kotroni, where they could stand a bay, though Herodotus says they were pursued up the valley. On the wings they were victorious; and the allies of the Persians who were there, retiring creditably enough, with their faces to the enemy, did not see the marshes behind them, but floundered into them backwards. There was struggling to regain a footing, and general confusion, of which the Greeks took advantage, and pressed them harder till they were hopelessly broken and discomfited. But the victorious wings now perceived that their own center was dislocated from them, and had lost ground before the *élite* of the Persian army; they therefore faced about and fell on their flanks. The Persian center, now engaged on three sides, at last gave way likewise, and fell back in the direction of their galleys. Covered probably by the archers from the decks most of the troops got safe on board. Then the Greeks raised a yell of disappointment, called for fire to burn the ships, and many rushed into the water to try to board them. One of the foremost

of these was Cynegeirus, brother to the poet *Æschylus*; but, as he grasped the stern-ornament of a trireme, he dropped back with both his hands chopped off. Some say that he maintained his hold until he lost first one hand, then the other, and lastly his head, as he caught the gunwale with his teeth.

So ended the immortal battle of Marathon, which stands almost alone by the side of Morgarten among the miracles achieved by the inspiration of Freedom. The Persians were sufficiently beaten, but their rout could hardly have been so complete as Herodotus describes, since they had not far to run. They lost six thousand four hundred men, mostly in the swamps, and seven galleys, held back by main force or carried by boarding. It was in the fight at the ships that, besides Cynegeirus, many Athenians of note fell, among them two of the generals, one of whom was Callimachus. The Athenians lost one hundred and ninety-two men in the action. As the greater number are said to have fallen in the attack on the ships, either those who gave way before the Persians and Sacæ were few, or they only suffered a partial repulse. Greek armies, from their formation in compact phalanx, seldom lost many men until they were broken, when their long spears and heavy armament rendered them more defenseless than lighter troops. Marathon afterwards became a household word at Athens, as Waterloo with us. A "man who had fought at Marathon" had a patent of popular nobility. Athenian orators made it a favorite commonplace; and Athenian satirists found it an inexhaustible fund of jest upon the national vanity. Wonderful stories were related in connection with the battle. On the return of Pheidippides, the courier from Sparta, he said that as he was crossing a mountain in Arcadia

he was accosted by the wood-god Pan, who called to him by name, and complained of his worship being neglected by the Athenians, while he was always well disposed towards them. In consequence, a temple was dedicated to Pan under the Acropolis, and he was honored with annual sacrifices and a torch-race. National heroes were supposed to have been present, and to have assisted in the fight; and one Athenian was suddenly struck blind in the thick of the fray by (as he declared) the passing before his eyes of a supernatural giant, who slew the man at his side.

When the Persians had re-embarked, their fleet doubled Cape Sunium, and made a demonstration in the direction of the harbor of Athens, with the hope of surprising the city; but the Athenians returned in time to cover it. There was an ugly rumor, which Herodotus entirely disbelieves, that a shield was hoisted on the walls as a telegraphic signal by the Alcmaeonids. This, doubtless, emanated from the opposite faction; for the Isagorids and Alcmaeonids of Athens hated each other as cordially, and slandered each other as unscrupulously, as the English Tories and Whigs of the time of Queen Anne.

The tale of the subsequent fate of Miltiades is one of the most painful passages in history. In the first flush of his popularity he asked the Athenians to give him seventy ships fully equipped, only deigning to tell them that he would get them gold in abundance. They asked no questions, but gave him the fleet. He had a private grudge against the people of Paros, and he now sailed to the island of marble, and laid siege to its town. His patience began to be at an end, when a certain priestess offered to forward his views. In leaping the wall of the sacred precincts after an in-



terview with her he dislocated his thigh. He then returned to Athens disabled, and as soon as he arrived was put upon his trial on the capital charge of having deceived the state, his accuser being Xanthippus, father of the great Pericles. The crippled hero lay on a couch in court while his friends defended him. They could not say a word in extenuation of the Parian escapade, but rested his defense on the fact that he had saved Athens at Marathon, and regained Lemnos. But, unfortunately for Miltiades, this was not the first time that he had had to appear on a charge of like nature. It seemed as if he wished to make himself despot of Paros—perhaps even despot of Athens—as he had made himself despot of the Chersonese. It was not for this that they had got rid of Hippias. If he commanded well at Marathon, so did the other generals, two of them now no more; nay, every man who fought in those ranks seemed as good a hero as he, for Marathon, like Inkermann, was a “soldier’s battle.” If he took Lemnos, he had missed taking Paros, and wasted the public money at a time when the treasury was low. They had not the heart to condemn him to death, for as he lay before them he seemed to bear death’s mark already—and, indeed, it must have appeared to them as impossible as for the king of Italy to punish Garibaldi for treason after his wound at Aspromonte; but they condemned him in the expenses of the abortive expedition, amounting to fifty talents (above £12,000). As his son Cimon was able to pay these heavy damages, his judges seem to have had no intention of absolutely ruining him. Soon afterwards physical mortification in the injured limb, assisted no doubt by mental, put an untimely end to the days of the Man of Marathon.

## CHAPTER X.

## THERMOPYLÆ

“Singing of men that in battle array,  
Ready in heart and ready in hand.  
March with banner, and bugle, and fife,  
To the death, for their native land.”

—TENNYSON, “Maud.”

AFTER the terrible defeat of his best generals at Marathon, Darius thought the Athenians worth his personal attention. That battle took place in the autumn of B.C. 490; and the king occupied the next three years in preparations for a new expedition, which he intended to lead in person. But a revolt in Egypt divided his attention; and he was considering in which direction he was most wanted, when he was summoned from the scene by a mightier monarch than himself, after a reign of six and-thirty years. His fourth son, Xerxes, succeeded him—not his first-born, Artabazanes; because Xerxes had been born in the purple, and of a daughter of Cyrus; whereas the elder sons had been born when Darius was a subject, and of the daughter of a subject. Xerxes soon disposed of the Egyptian revolt, and left his brother Achæmenes satrap of the country. Then he took up the great quarrel bequeathed him by his father, but, after many hesitations and vacillations, signified in the narrative of Herodotus by dreams and their interpretations, and opposite opinions said to have been given by Artabanus, who dissuaded, and Mardonius, who was in favor of an invasion. The

young king was evidently afraid of compromising his newly-inherited prosperity. He was of a luxurious character, not craving, like Darius, for barren honor; and if he left the Greeks alone, it would be a long time before they found their way to Susa. When the bolder counsels at last prevailed, he resolved to make matters as safe as possible. Grecian liberty was not to be stabbed, but stifled, to death. He would pour out all Asia upon it. So he took four good years in preparation, gathering a host of armed, half-armed, and almost unarmed men, such as has hardly been seen before or since. The soldiers, with the exception of the select few, carried the rudest national weapons—bows and arrows, poleaxes, “morning-stars,” even staves and lassos. Some rate the host as high as five millions; others give less than half that number. The men were measured, like dry goods—not counted; that is, a pen was made which could hold ten thousand, through which the whole army passed in successive batches. It is time, perhaps, that a common error should be exploded, into which, however, it would be impossible for any attentive reader of Herodotus to fall. No schoolboy believes now, as elderly men did when they were boys, that the French are a nation of cowards. But it is possible for careless readers of Greek history to believe that the Persians were cowards; else, they might say, how should they have been beaten by so small a number of Greeks? And were they not obliged to flog their soldiers into action? Perhaps this was only a Greek version of the fact that corporeal punishment was an institution in their army. Among the Greeks it was confined to slaves. The lash has not prevented Russians and Austrians—not to mention others—from fighting well. Perhaps the native Per-

sians, especially those of noble birth, were personally braver than the Greeks. But the Greeks had the immense advantage of discipline. In a disciplined army every man has the eyes of his comrades on him, and if fear is felt, it cannot act for very shame, and because it is counteracted by mechanical obedience. Aristotle assigns a special kind of courage to national militias, which all Greek armies were, which he calls the political courage, springing from the feeling of what is due from the individual to the community. This may not be courage of the most romantic kind, but it appears to answer its end perfectly; and Nelson thought it good enough to appeal to in his famous watchword, still written round the wheel of our war-ships—"England expects every man to do his duty." This kind of courage culminated in Leonidas. The Persian officers were even desperately brave, and always led the charges in person, which accounts for their great relative loss in battles. The Greek officers took their chance with the rest, being indistinguishable from the privates in the phalanx. Again, the number of their armies were a positive disadvantage to the Persians; for most of their auxiliary troops, when brought into contact with real soldiers, were as sheep brought to the shambles. The Greeks were also more efficiently armed. The Persian infantry were archers, carrying also pikes and daggers, who (like the English crossbow-man with his pavoise-bearer in the fifteenth century) made a bulwark of their great oblong wicker shields, as may be seen now in the Nimrud sculptures, and shot from behind them. But when this bulwark was once forced the Persians had no protection but their light armor against the strong pikes of the Greeks. Our archers turned the scale of battle against superior forces at Cressy and Poitiers, because

they were the only body which had at all the character of regular troops.

The Persian officers had in some respects become luxurious and effeminate even in the time of Darius, riding in palanquins, keeping sumpter-camels, and so forth; but they do not appear to have been worse than our Anglo-Indians, who have never been reckoned deficient in valor. The French *mousquetaires*, who fought under Marshal Saxe, were as celebrated for their foppery as their gallantry in the field. "Hold hard—the dandies are coming!" was the word passed from one British soldier to another when their laced coats and three-cornered hats came in sight.

There is no need to follow in detail all the pomp and circumstance of the slow march of Xerxes into Greece. The vast army crossed from Abydos to Sestos by a double pontoon bridge; and Xerxes, like the spoiled child of the harem, is said to have ordered the Hellespont to be scourged, and chains to be thrown into it, and branding-irons to be plunged into the hissing water, because a storm had destroyed the work when first attempted. He is also said to have cut in halves the eldest son of a wealthy Lydian, who had made him an offer of all his property, but requested that one of his sons might be left behind; making his troops defile between the severed portions, by way of raising their enthusiasm. A similar story is told of Darius, which appears, in his case, incredible. The great interest of the expedition begins when it arrived where resistance might be expected from the Greeks. The land-force which marched round the coast was accompanied by more than twelve hundred war-galleys, besides a multitude of other craft. The navy passed through a new-made ship canal, by which the voyage round the for-

midable headland of Athos was avoided. Our author says the work was done in mere bravado, since the ships might have been drawn across the narrow neck of land with less labor and cost. It is remarkable, in the cutting of this canal (a work of three years, the traces of which are still distinctly visible), that all the other nations were senseless enough to make its sides perpendicular, which, from the continual landslips, gave them double trouble; while the Phœnicians alone proved themselves as good “navvies” as navigators, by making their cutting twice as broad at top as at bottom.

The news of the approach of this overwhelming host struck the Greeks with consternation, and all the northern tribes, including the Thebans, submitted to the invader. The Athenians were alarmed by dark oracles pointing apparently to their extermination, but containing one saving clause, that they might find safety in their “wooden walls.” They wisely interpreted this to mean their ships. Their troublesome war with the Æginetans proved now an advantage, as it had forced them to make large additions to their navy, the former poverty of which has been mentioned. Envoys were sent for aid to Argos, Sicily, Coreyra, and Crete. The Argives might be well excused for declining, as Cleomenes had just massacred six thousand out of their not probably more than ten thousand citizens. Gelon, the king of Syracuse, would have assisted, had not Sicily been just then invaded by a miscellaneous army of three hundred thousand men under the command of the Carthaginian Hamilcar, possibly induced, through the Phœnicians, to make this diversion in favor of Xerxes. Gelon had the good fortune to destroy this host in the decisive battle of Himera, on the same day as the Greek



victory at Salamis. The Corcyræans temporized, with their historical selfishness; the Cretans excused themselves on the faith of an oracle; so the Greeks proper were left to face their terrible enemy alone, and even among them there were many craven spirits who took the side of the Persians.

Thessaly, through which the course of the invaders lay, is a basin of mountains, like Bohemia, cracked by the gorge of the Peneus, as Bohemia is by that of the Elbe. This basin was doubtless, as Herodotus says, once a lake, until it was tapped by some convulsion of nature. Xerxes thought flooding the country quite feasible, by damming up the outlet of the river: no such measure, however, was necessary. At first the Greeks had intended to make their stand there, in the Vale of Tempe, celebrated for its beauty. Overhung by plane-woods, the high cliffs are festooned with creepers, and diversified with underwood, approaching here and there so closely as to leave barely room for the road and river. But they gave up this position when they found that Thessaly could easily be entered by another road over the mountains. They drew back towards the isthmus; and Thessaly at once made terms with the Persian king.

It was now decided to make the first stand at the narrow pass of Thermopylæ (Hotwells-Gate), the key of Greece itself. The river Spercheius has since established a tract of alluvial deposit between the mountain and the sea, but the hot springs are still there, in pools of clear water, and the other features of the scene remain much as they were in the time of Herodotus. The pass leads along the shore from Thessaly to Locris. The Grecian fleet were to support the army in the narrow strait by Artemisium, on the head of Eubœa (Neg-

ropont). As the Persian host rolled on, it had increased like a snowball, imbibing the contingents of all the districts that submitted. But the elements were still against the invaders. A storm arose when their fleet was off Magnesia, attributed by the Athenians to the intervention of Boreas (the North Wind), who had married a daughter of their mythical king Erechtheus. At least four hundred galleys perished, and so much wealth was cast ashore that the wreckers on the coast became rich men; and the Persians soon after lost fifteen ships more, which mistook the enemy's fleet for their own. Xerxes was himself with the land-force which had now occupied the territory of Trachis, north of the pass of Thermopylæ. The little Greek army had posted itself behind an ancient wall, which barred the pass, and which they had repaired, at a spot where there was only room for a single chariot-road. The nucleus of the force (in all under 8000 of all arms) was three hundred thorough-bred Spartans, each attended by his seven Helots. They were all fathers of families, who had left sons at home to succeed them. At their head was Leonidas, now senior king of Sparta. This small force was expected to be able to hold the pass until the rest were disengaged; for the Spartans were keeping a local feast, and the other Greeks were engaged at the great Olympian festival. Perhaps the very extremity of the danger made the Greeks put their religious duties in the foreground; and, indeed, Leonidas and his men went out as to an expected sacrifice. A Persian scout reported to Xerxes that he found the Spartans busy dressing their hair. In surprise the king appealed for explanation to his refugee guest Demaratus, the banished king of Sparta, whom he had brought to Greece in his train. The Spartan warned him that it betokened, on

the part of his countrymen, a resistance to the death. Usually careless of their dress, there was one occasion when they polished their arms, combed their long hair and wreathed it with flowers, and put on scarlet vests: it was when they expected a battle which they might not survive. Xerxes waited four days to see if they would retire, and then ordered his Medes and Cissians to bring them to him in chains. For a whole day these made repeated attacks, and were as often repulsed with heavy loss. The Persian "Immortals" were then launched at them, and fared no better. These troops were so called because they were always kept up to the exact number of ten thousand,\* and represented the Imperial Guard. Often pretending flight, so as to draw them on in loose pursuit, the Greeks turned on their enemies and butchered them. One would have thought that this affair in the front would have made little impression on that dense host; but Xerxes is said to have leaped thrice from his throne as the wave of disturbance reached him, fearing for his whole army. On the third day a native guide came and told the king of a pass over the mountains, by which the Greeks might be taken in rear, and he selected Hydarnes, the commander of the Immortals, for this important service. The crest of this pass (the existence of which the Greeks had learned too late) was watched on their behalf by a thousand Phocians, who were warned by hearing the rustling of the dry leaves of the oak-wood, but thinking an attack on their own post was intended, retired to a more defensible position, and let Hydarnes pass on. The way in which the little band of heroes received the an-

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\* The forty members of the French Academy are so nicknamed for the same reason.

nouncement that their position had been turned should be told in Herodotus's own words:

“First, the soothsayer, Megistias, as he inspected the sacrifices, warned them of the death which awaited them with the morrow's dawn. Then came some deserters, who told them of the march of the Persians round the hill. All this was while it was still night. Then, when the day had broken, their scouts came running down from the heights with the same news. Thereupon the Greeks took counsel, and their opinions were divided; for some would not hear of quitting their post, while others advised to do so. Then they parted asunder, and some went off and dispersed each to their own cities, and some prepared to remain there with Leonidas. It is even said that Leonidas himself sent them away, anxious that they should not be slain; but for himself and the Spartans who were there, it was not seemly, he said, for them to leave a post which they had once undertaken to keep.”

Those who chose the nobler alternative, besides the Spartans and their Laconian subjects and Helot slaves, who could not help themselves, were seven hundred Thespians and four hundred Thebans—the latter, our author says, detained as hostages, but probably proscribed at home for refusing to submit, like the rest, to Xerxes. The struggle now could have but one issue. Xerxes ordered a general attack at daybreak, and Leonidas, in order to sell the lives of his men as dearly as possible, ordered them to advance from the defile itself, and attack in the open. The Persians perished in crowds—some driven into the sea, some trampled to death by their comrades, others urged forward by stripes only to fall on the deadly lances of the Greeks.

Dead weight, however, began to tell against the latter,

when they had broken their spears in barbarian bodies, and had used their swords till they were weary. At last Leonidas fell, and over his body the struggle was renewed more furiously than ever.

“The dead around him on that day  
In a semicircle lay.”

In that swathe of corpses were found two brothers of Xerxes. Four times the Greeks repulsed the enemy, and at last bore off the body of their king. They had but short breathing-space. Their hour was come when the fatal troops of Hydarnes came down the hills in their rear. The survivors drew back into the narrowest part of the pass, within the wall, and posted themselves on a hillock, where a stone lion afterwards marked the resting-place of Leonidas. So did the survivors of the Khyber Pass massacre in 1841 draw together for a last stand on the hillock at Gundamuck, whence a single officer escaped to Peshawur to tell that the British army was exterminated.

The four hundred Thebans saved themselves by a timely surrender; the remaining four thousand Greeks were buried in a hail-shower of missiles. Herodotus awards the palm of valor to a Spartan wit, who, when he was told that the Persian arrows would darken the air, said: “Then we shall have but a shadow-fight” (or sham-fight). Such a man would have appreciated the ghastly witticisms of the guillotine in the French Revolution. Xerxes, with an indecency towards the dead quite opposed to all Persian usage, had the head of Leonidas cut off and fixed upon a pole.

The Greek combined fleet was commanded by the Spartan Eurybiades. The Spartans would only co-

operate on condition that the command should be theirs, though they only furnished ten ships, while the Athenians mustered one hundred and twenty-seven. Spartan provincialism forms a strong contrast to the national patriotism of the little state of Plataea, which threw itself heart and soul into the cause of Greek independence. Though landsmen, the Plataeans helped to man the Athenian fleet. They were afterwards rewarded by vile ingratitude from Sparta, and lukewarm friendship from Athens.

The whole naval strength counted two hundred and seventy-one three-banked galleys. The Persian disaster in the storm had now been balanced by a Greek disaster in the field; and the barometer of Hellenic confidence fell again. There was even talk of leaving Eubœa to its fate, and retreating southwards. Themistocles, the Athenian commander, was a man who had raised himself to a foremost position from small beginnings, which may account for his understanding so well the use and power of money. If Mammon was one of his gods, he could make him his servant for good as well as for evil. The Eubœans, alarmed for their families and goods, besought the Spartan admiral not to desert them; and finding him impracticable, applied to Themistocles—this time backing their prayers with a present of thirty talents. Themistocles knew Eurybiades better than they, and gave him five talents out of the thirty, as if they had come from himself, or from the treasury of the Athenians, and three more to Adeimantus the Corinthian, whose valor, among all the national commanders, seemed most strongly tempered with discretion. The rest of this secret-service money he kept for himself.

The Persians, in great fear lest the Greek fleet should



escape them under cover of night, detached two hundred ships, with orders to sail round outside Eubœa, and back up the strait between the island and the mainland, and so block in the enemy.

The battle—or rather battles, for there were three—of Artemisium began by desultory and provocative attacks on the part of the Greeks, who, when they had brought the whole Persian fleet upon them, rolled theirs up like a hedgehog or porcupine, with the spines outside. They drew their sterns all together, and formed a circle with their sharp beaks turned every way. In the first *mêlée* thirty ships were taken from the Persians. The battle lasted through the midsummer evening, and then each fleet withdrew to its moorings. The sea was like oil, and that ominous calm reigned from which better sailors than the Greeks would have foretold storm. At midnight it thundered and lightened on Mount Pelion, the wind rose, and the wrecks and bodies were drifted to the station of the Persian fleet, and struck the crews with dismay. But it fared worse with their detached division, which was utterly destroyed on the rocks on the outer coast of Eubœa. Thus did the good wind Boreas still seem to help his friends. A reinforcement of fifty-three fresh Athenian galleys came up at daybreak, having escaped the storm inside the island. The ancient war-ships, even the great “five-bankers” of the Romans and Carthaginians, could stand no more weather than a river-steamer; while their great rounded Dutch-built merchant ships would ride out a moderate gale fairly. On the afternoon of the second day the Greeks attacked again, and sank some Cilician vessels. On the third day about noon the Persians began the attack, while the Greeks kept their station at Artemisium. There was much fouling among the Per-

sians from their closely-packed vessels, but they fought well, and neither side could claim much advantage. The Athenians gained most distinction among the allies; and of the Athenians Cleinias, son of Alcibiades, and father of him of that name who afterwards was the representative Athenian of the new school. He had manned and equipped his trireme at his own expense. The Greeks remained masters of the field—that is, of the scene of action, with the bodies and wrecks; but as half the Athenian fleet had been more or less damaged, they decided on withdrawing southward, especially as they now heard of the loss of Thermopylæ. Before he went, Themistocles had inscriptions graven on the rocks by all the watering-places, exhorting the Ionian Greeks now in the service of Persia to desert. If this had no effect on those to whom they were addressed, it would at any rate make them objects of suspicion to the Persians. Then the Greeks sailed away—the Corinthians first, the Athenians, as became them, last.

While the Persian sailors and marines were wasting the north of Eubœa, a herald came from Xerxes ordering a day's leave ashore to be given, that the crews might view the field of Thermopylæ. On the Greek side were four thousand bodies in a heap, which the king pretended were all Spartans or Thespians; on his side lay about a thousand, scattered all over the field. The rest of the Persians had been carefully buried beforehand; but the trick deceived nobody.

The Persian army now advanced and ravaged Phocis, and on the farther frontier parted into two divisions, the larger entering the friendly territory of Bœotia, and making for Athens—the smaller proceeding towards Delphi. Xerxes was well instructed as to the wealth

of Apollo's temple, and must have known by heart all the costly offerings that Cræsus had made. The Delphians in dismay consulted their oracle: the god replied that "he could protect his own." Just when the enemy reached the ascent to the temple a thunder-storm burst forth, and great rocks came rolling down the steep of Parnassus. The Persians fled and the Delphians, assisted apparently by two supernatural warriors, emerged from their hiding-places and slew the hindermost. The priests of Apollo were doubtless adepts in the machinery of the stage.

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## CHAPTER XI.

## SALAMIS.

"The man of firm and righteous will,  
No rabble, clamorous for the wrong,  
No tyrant's brow, whose frown may kill,  
Can shake the strength that makes him strong:  
Not winds, that chafe the sea they sway,  
Nor Jove's right hand, with lightning red:  
Should Nature's pillared frame give way,  
That wreck would strike one fearless head."

—CONINGTON'S "Horace."

SUCH is the portrait of Themistocles, as drawn by Kaulbach of Munich, in his great cartoon of the battle of Salamis. He stands at ease on the deck of his galley, sacrificing to the gods while the battle is ending. We feel that he would be as composed and dignified, only somewhat sadder, if the ruin were coming on him instead of on the enemy. The very self-seeking of

this remarkable man in the midst of the most exciting circumstances bears testimony to the admirable balance of his nature. He somewhat resembles Marlborough, of whom, for all his romantic courage, Macaulay too severely says, that in his youth he loved lucre more than wine or women, and in his middle age he loved lucre more than power or glory. But it must be remembered that Themistocles was a Greek, and the versatile Ulysses is the-very type of a Greek hero. It was not in the Greek character to vie with Darius in his right royal disdain of petty advantage and private revenge. The Greeks would have made far better "hucksters" than that king who was so called by his nobles because he was a good financier. And Themistocles was a first-rate example of the middle-class burgher, as "the curled Alcibiades" was of the "gilded youth" of a cultivated Greek republic. He was Presence-of-mind incarnate. But he was honest withal—with the honesty of a good Jew with whom one might safely deposit millions, but who would not fail to make every shilling breed. And he was a patriot—one who would die for his country at any moment, but was far too sensible to believe in her or to trust her. The sequel of his life showed that he was right. Themistocles, though not the highest type of man, is perhaps the most perfect specimen of the Greek on record.

The Athenians had hoped that the combined Greek forces would make a stand in Bœotia, but in this they were disappointed. The primary object of the Spartans was to take care of themselves; their secondary object, to save Greece that they might rule it. They wished the Athenians out of their way, but they felt that if

the fire spread to them it would be coming somewhat close to their own home. Could they not sacrifice Athens, and save the Athenians, who would then be their obedient servants? So they withdrew their land-forces behind the Isthmus of Corinth, which they proceeded to fortify; while the combined fleet was induced, by the entreaties of the Athenians, to anchor off the island of Salamis, to which most of the latter proceeded to transfer for safety their families and goods.

The Greeks had received reinforcements which made their fleet larger now than when it had fought at Artemisium. The Athenians now furnished one hundred and eighty of the three hundred and seventy-eight galleys. The Persian army entered Athens only to find an empty city—none had remained in it but some of the very poorest, or a few obstinate heads who saw in the palisade of the citadel the “wooden walls” of the oracle, and strengthened it with planks accordingly. The Persians encamped on the Areopagus (the Mars’ Hill of St. Paul), and shot lighted arrows at the barricade, which was soon in flames. But their storming-parties were foiled by a gallant defense, until a few soldiers scaled a place where no watch was kept, and were followed by others, who put the weak garrison to the sword. The temple of the goddess was plundered and burnt, and Xerxes sent a messenger home to Susa to announce that his vengeance was complete.

The sacrifice of Athens was unavoidable, yet it greatly affected the allies, who thought of withdrawing their fleet to the isthmus. But the Athenians felt that this step would almost certainly lead to its breaking up. There was a long war of words between Themistocles, Eurybiades, and Adeimantus. This last was insolent to the Athenian. “You have no country now,” said

he, "and therefore no vote." Themistocles replied, that with two hundred well-manned ships the Athenians would find a country wherever they chose to land. At last the threat that the Athenians would all emigrate to Italy, and give up the war, prevailed. And preparations were made for battle.

The time was naturally one which abounded with portents and prodigies, which were generally interpreted to the disadvantage of the enemy. It was the time of the year of the great procession in honor of Ceres and Bacchus from Eleusis to Athens. It could not be held now in the presence of the enemy, but a chant was heard in the air, as from no mortal choir, and a column of dust was seen to rise and spread into a heavy cloud which overshadowed the Persian armament. Some enthusiasts averred that they saw the heroes Ajax, Teucer, and Achilles, battling for their homesteads in Salamis and Ægina. Their images, at all events, were brought out to battle for good luck. The Spanish Carlists, when they appointed the image of *Nostra Señora de los Dolores* generalissimo of their forces, went a step further; and this was in our remembrance.

The Persian fleet had already lost six hundred and fifty ships, but Herodotus says that it had been reinforced to the original number by the contingents from the islands and some maritime states—an assertion which seems hardly probable. At Phalerum, the harbor of Athens, a council of war was held. The best head in the fleet of Xerxes was a woman's—Artemisia, queen of Halicarnassus. This Amazon of the sea seemed almost a match for that goddess of war and wisdom whom the Athenians worshiped. She always appears a special favorite with her townsman Herodotus, who nevertheless is said to have found the tyranny of her family



unendurable. She advised Xerxes to bide his time, and let the Greek confederacy fall to pieces from internal dissensions. But the party of action prevailed; the land-forces marched on the isthmus, where Cleombrotus, brother of Leonidas, now commanded, and the fleet weighed anchor.

The Spartans and other Greeks within the Peninsula had meanwhile been working night and day, throwing up a wall of defence across the isthmus. Their panic communicated itself to the fleet, so that Themistocles was obliged at last to resort to a desperate stratagem. He sent to the Persian commanders secretly, to tell them that he was a well-wisher of the king's, and that the Greeks meditated flight. The Persians believed it, and made such arrangements of their forces, under cover of the night, as would effectually prevent the escape of their enemies. The Greek council of captains was still in fierce debate when the Athenian Aristides arrived from Ægina, where he was undergoing ostracism (he was said to have been banished because the people were tired of hearing him called "the Just"), and said that he had just succeeded in getting through the enemy, who had completely surrounded the Greeks. All now made up their minds for the inevitable fight, and the commanders addressed the crews—Themistocles, with the most powerful eloquence. But the enemy attacked so fiercely that the Greeks backed water, till Ameinias the Athenian, whose blood was hotter than that of the rest, darted forward and engaged an enemy's ship. The two became entangled, and others coming up to their aid, the conflict became general. The Persians themselves fought better than at Artemisium, although they became involved in the same inextricable confusion, while the Greeks never allowed their line to be broken. The

very circumstance that the Persians were under the eye of their king, who overlooked the battle from a neighboring promontory, told in one respect against them, since it caused those in the rear to press to the front, and thus get involved with their own retreating ships; so that a tangled ball of hulls, oars, and rigging was formed, which the freely-moving Greeks could strike at and tear to pieces at their leisure.

The vanquished showed in some instances great gallantry. The liege lady of Herodotus, Queen Artemisia, distinguished herself as much in the fight as in the council, but in a way of questionable morality. Being hard pressed by an Athenian galley, she turned on one belonging to her own allies, and sank it. The Athenian thought he must have made a mistake, and sheered off, while the unsuspecting Xerxes admired the good service his fair ally seemed to be doing. "My men," said he, "fight like women, and my women like men." Such cool effrontery would have been unintelligible to a Persian. There was a petty king on board the galley which she had sunk; but drowned men tell no tales.

A brother of the king, Ariabignes, the admiral, perished, and a vast number of noble Persians. The Greeks whose ships were sunk mostly saved themselves by swimming, while the Persians lost more drowned than killed in action. The fugitives tried to reach Phalerum, but there were Æginetans outside who swooped on them like falcons. The stage-coward of the battles of Artemisium and Salamis is the unfortunate Adeimantus, who is accused of attempted flight. Why was Herodotus, usually so impartial, so spiteful against him and the Corinthians? He may have relied on Athenian information, or perhaps some general impression of Greek half-heartedness must have come from Halicarnassian

or Ionian sources. Æschylus, in his magnificent tragedy of "The Persians," beside which the prose of Herodotus is tame, speaks of nothing but patriotic zeal, singing of pæans, and joyous alacrity. The hero of Waterloo is said to have modestly observed to some ladies who complimented him on a description of the battle, "I ought to know all about it, for I was there myself." So Æschylus ought to be our best authority for the battle of Salamis, as he was present himself, probably in the ship of his brother Ameinias. According to him, it was the Persians who were caught in a trap by Themistocles: thinking the Greeks were in retreat they had made their arrangements for chase and not for action, which rendered their discomfiture more easy; since not only did those who came up break their fighting order, but, as at Artemisium, they had detached a considerable squadron to block the entrance to the strait. The poet describes the chase as lasting till midnight, in the open sea, the Greeks destroying the helpless enemy "like fishermen harpooning in a shoal of tunny-fish." All the shore of Attica was strewn with wrecks.

"Slow sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,  
Behind Morea's hills the setting sun;  
Not as in northern climes, obscurely bright,  
But one unclouded blaze of living light!  
O'er the hushed deep the yellow beam he throws,  
Gilds the green wave, that trembles as it glows.  
On old Ægina's rock, and Hydra's isle,  
The god of gladness sheds his parting smile;  
O'er his own regions lingering, loves to shine,  
Though there his altars are no more divine.  
Descending fast, the mountain-shadows kiss  
Thy glorious gulf, unconquered Salamis!" \*

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\* Byron—"The Corsair."

But never did the sun of Greece set on a scene so memorable, and so beautiful in one sense, in the midst of its terror, as on that autumn evening in the year 480 B.C. There was yet more to be done, but Greece and civilization were safe.

The destruction of the grand fleet necessitated the retreat of the heterogeneous multitude which called itself the grand army, for it depended on the fleet for most of its supplies. But it was hoped that a picked force might still succeed, and Xerxes left behind 300,000 troops under the command of Mardonius, who went into winter quarters in Thessaly, when he started homewards with all possible speed. This flight may have had state reasons for it, like that of Napoleon from Russia, for the outlying provinces were always ready for insurrection; but, considering his character, the simple interpretation of his conduct appears the most probable that he was thoroughly cowed. Themistocles wished to follow up the victory by hunting the fugitives from island to island, and then destroying the bridge of boats over the Hellespont. When he was overruled by Eurybiades he gave out that he had changed his mind, and sent a faithful slave to find Xerxes, and tell him that, out of personal good will to his majesty, Themistocles had prevented the Greeks from destroying the bridge.

An unusually early winter, as in the Russian campaign of 1812, added to the sufferings of the retreat. According to the tragedian Æschylus great numbers perished in attempting to cross the frozen Strymon, thus forestalling the Beresina disaster. The Hellespont bridge had been broken up, not by the Greeks but by a storm; but there was no difficulty in ferrying across the miserable remnant in boats. At Abydos they came

on supplies, and many who had survived starvation on grass and tree-bark died of surfeit. One version of the account makes Xerxes leave his army on the Strymon, and take ship himself for Asia. A storm coming on, the ship was in such danger that the pilot declared that there was no chance of safety unless some of those on board would sacrifice themselves to lighten it, and appealed to the loyalty of the Persians, who accordingly leaped overboard. It is added that, on coming safely to land, the king presented the pilot with a golden crown for saving his own life, and then had him beheaded for causing the death of so many of his gallant servants. The latter part looks like the repetition of an anecdote of Cambyses; and, indeed, Herodotus scarcely believes the story, as he observes that the Persians might have been sent below, and the Phœnician crew sacrificed. It did not seem to strike him that sailors are of more use in a storm than the best soldiers, and the self-devoting loyalty of the Persians to their monarch's person is well known.

The Greeks passed an anxious winter, for Mardonius remained in Thessaly, making his preparations for action in the spring. Their allied fleet, a hundred and ten strong, was persuaded to come as far as Delos by an embassy from Asia (one of whom was an Herodotus, possibly a relative of our author), who represented that the Greek colonies there were ripe for revolt. They were, however, deterred for the present from proceeding farther; possibly because a Lacedæmonian, naturally a landsman, was first in command. Mardonius in the mean time spent the winter in consulting oracles, the answers of which do not seem to have been particularly encouraging, as he afterwards resorted to the more statesmanlike measure of endeavoring to detach

the Athenians from the Greek alliance. For this mission he selected Alexander, the son of Amyntas, prince of Macedon. The Spartans, hearing of it, sent ambassadors on their part to beseech them not to desert the cause of Greece. The Athenians, with something of a lofty contempt, bade them have no fear, and told Alexander that they would carry on the war with the destroyers of their city and temples "so long as the sun held its course in heaven," and warned him as he valued his safety never again to bring them a like proposal. They were terribly in earnest; for when one Lycidas, a fellow-townsmen, counseled submission on another occasion, they stoned him to death.

---

## CHAPTER XII.

### PLATÆA AND MYCÆLE.

"A day of onsets of despair!  
Dashed on every rocky square,  
Their surging charges foamed themselves away.  
Last the Prussian trumpet blew;  
Through the long-tormented air  
Heaven flashed a sudden jubilant ray,  
And down we swept, and charged, and overthrew."

—TENNYSON: "Ode on the Death of the  
Duke of Wellington."

THE concluding act of the great historical drama opens with the spring of B.C. 479. Mardonius has come south from Thessaly, and is gleaning in Athens whatever the spoiler, Xerxes, had left. The Athenians are again in their island-asylum of Salamis. The Spar-



tans are marching on the Isthmus of Corinth, under the command of Pausanias, who had succeeded his father Cleombrotus in the regency and the guardianship of the young son of Leonidas, who did not live to reign. After a demonstration towards Megara, where he hoped to cut off the advanced guard of the allies, Mardonius proceeded into the Theban territory, where he constructed a vast fortified camp on the bank of the river Asopus. A general advance was now made by the Peloponnesians from the isthmus to Eleusis, where they were joined by the Athenian contingent from Salamis. When they had ascertained where the Persians were they set themselves in array along the highlands of Cithæron. As they seemed indisposed to come down into the plain, Mardonius sent his cavalry to feel their position, under the command of Masistius.

This Murat of the Persian army was a handsome giant, who rode a white Nisæan charger, whose accouterments, as well as those of his rider, glittered with gold. So rode Charles of Burgundy at Granson or at Morat. In the present day such costume is scarcely to be seen further west than India, and some tall Rajah, full dressed for the Governor-General's durbar, would give a good idea of how Masistius looked at the head of his cuirassiers. These galloped up to the Greek infantry in troops, hurling their javelins, and calling them "women" because they did not come on. The Megarians were in the most exposed place. Being hard pressed they sent to Pausanias for succor. When he called for volunteers the Athenians promptly offered, and three hundred picked men, supported by archers, moved up. The charges continued without cessation, Masistius leading with the utmost gallantry, and presenting a conspicuous mark to the bowmen. At last an arrow

pierced the side of his charger. He reared back from the agony of the wound, and threw his rider, who now lay at the mercy of his enemies, stunned by his fall, and, like the knights of the middle ages, helpless from the weight of his panoply. His vest of Tyrian crimson was pierced with spear-points, but still he lived, for under it he wore a shirt of golden mail. At last a hand more dexterous than the rest pierced his brain through one of the eye-holes of his visor, for he was too proud to ask for quarter. Among his own followers, as they charged and wheeled about, no one knew that he was dead, and they might even have ridden over the body of their unconscious commander, as the Prussian cavalry did over Blucher when he lay under his dead horse at Ligny. But when they retired he was immediately missed, for there was no one to give the word of command. All that they could now do for him was to recover his body, and with this object the squadrons united and made a combined onset. To meet this the Athenians called up other Greek troops to their assistance. While they were coming, a fierce struggle took place for the body, which the Athenians were obliged to leave till their reinforcements joined them. But, as it could not be easily removed by cavalry, it ultimately remained in possession of the Greeks. Many Persian knights shared the fate of their commander, so that the rest of the troopers were obliged to ride back to Mardonius with the news of their misfortune. The death of Masistius was considered such a blow that it was bewailed by the whole army, corps after corps taking up the dole of their Adonis, till it resounded through all Bœotia, and horses and men were ordered to be shorn and shaven as a sign of public mourning; for Masistius, next to Mardonius, was considered the

greatest man in the army. To the Greeks his fall was a matter of equal rejoicing, and the handsome corpse was carried along the lines to raise the spirits of the soldiers. Their fear of cavalry was now wearing off, and a general forward movement was made towards the plain of Plataea, where water was more abundant. They took up a new position near the Gargaphian Fountain (the modern Vergantiani). Here a hot debate arose between the Tegeans and Athenians, each demanding the honor of occupying the left wing (the Spartans always claimed the right), which was decided, chiefly on mythological grounds, in favor of the Athenians. The army was thus marshaled: on the right were five thousand heavy-armed Spartans, with thirty-five thousand light-armed Helots, and of other Laconians five thousand; then the Tegeans, then the other Greek contingents, till on the extreme left six hundred Plataeans stood by the side of eight thousand Athenians under Aristides. The decision of Greek battles mainly rested on the heavy-armed infantry. Each man of these was generally attended by his military servant, and looked upon himself as an officer and a gentleman. The Athenian contingent probably represented all who were not engaged on board the fleet. The remnant of the Thespians—whose city as well as Plataea had been sacked—eighteen hundred in number, were also there, but now too much impoverished to serve as heavy-armed. The sum total of the army was one hundred and ten thousand men, being less than one to three to the army of the king.

Mardonius honored the Spartans by confronting them with his best troops, the Persians; he posted his Medes, Bactrians, Indians, and Sacæ opposite the other Greeks, and threatened the Athenians with his Greek and Mace-

donian allies. Besides his three hundred thousand, he had a number of small contingents, such as marines from the fleet, and perhaps fifty thousand Greek auxiliaries. It was not the custom for any army to engage until the omens had been pronounced favorable; and the soothsayers on both sides constantly reported that they were favorable for defense, but not for attack. After the two armies had thus watched each other for eight days, Mardonius was advised to occupy the passes of Cithæron, as the Greeks were constantly being reinforced from that quarter, and accordingly dispatched cavalry to a pass leading to Plataea, called "Three Heads" by the Bœotians, and "Oakheads" by the Athenians (the Greek words sounding much the same). This foray resulted in destroying a military train of five hundred sumpter animals, which was making its way to the Greek army. The next two days were passed in demonstrations of cavalry up to the Asopus, which ran between the armies, the Theban horse showing great alacrity in annoying their Hellenic brethren, but leaving the serious fighting to the Persians. On the eleventh day Mardonius, tired of inaction, held a council of war, the result of which was that he ordered an attack on the next day, in spite of the still unfavorable auspices.

In the dead of night, as the armies lay in position, the Athenian sentries were accosted by a solitary horseman who asked to speak to their commanders. When they came to the front, he told them that the omens had till now restrained Mardonius, but that yesterday he had "bid the omens farewell," and intended to fight on the morrow. He added, that he hoped that his present service would not be forgotten; he was of Greek origin, and a secret friend of the Greeks: his name was Alexander, the son of Amyntas of

Macedonia. As soon as the message had been reported to Pausanias, he, with a scarcely Spartan spirit, wished the Athenians to change places with him, as, from their experience at Marathon, they knew the Persian manner of fighting better. And this maneuver, dangerous as it was to attempt in the face of the enemy, would have been executed, had not Mardonius discovered it, and made a corresponding disposition of his own army. He then sent a herald to reproach the Spartans, and challenge them to fight man for man, with or without the rest of the combatants, as they pleased. As no answer was given his cavalry were launched *en masse* against the Greek army. The mounted archers caused them great annoyance, and destroyed the Gargaphian well, from which their water supply was drawn. The supplies from the rear having been cut off, the Greeks determined on a westward movement towards the city of Platæa, where they would be within reach of water. Half the army were to carry out this movement in the night, while the other half were to fall back on Cithæron, to protect their line of communication with their base behind the isthmus. The first division had suffered so much during the day that in their joy at the respite they retired too far, and never halted till they reached the precincts of a temple of Juno, close to Platæa itself. Pausanias himself was following, but he was kept back by the insubordination of a sturdy colonel named Amompharetus, who objected to any strategic movements which looked like running away. At length he was left to follow or not as he pleased, while the rest of the Spartans defiled along the safe and hilly ground, the Athenians striking across the exposed plain. Mardonius had now some reason to despise

his enemy, and he ordered all his cavalry to charge, and the infantry to advance at quick march, crossing the Asopus. The Athenians were hidden from him by a series of knolls, but he pressed hard on the steps of the Lacedæmonians and Tegeans. Fortune sometimes favors the timid as well as the brave. Seeing Mardonius apparently pursuing the enemy, the rest of his army at once broke their ranks and followed in disorder, each man eager to be in at the death of the quarry which his commander was hunting down. Pausanias had already sent a mounted orderly to the Athenians to beg that they would come to his assistance, or at least send their archers, as he was sorely vexed by the cavalry. They could not comply, as they wanted all their strength to repulse a general attack which was just then being made on them by the king's Greeks. Pausanias halted his line; but still the sacrifices were unpropitious. From behind the Persian breastwork of shields came a rain of arrows, and the breastwork itself seemed impregnable. The Lacedæmonians and Tegeans were falling fast. At last Pausanias espied at no great distance the temple of Juno, and offered up a prayer to the goddess. The omens at once changed as by magic. The Tegeans dashed at the enemy's fence of shields. The Spartans followed, and the battle was won. The Persians fought like bull-dogs, singly or in knots, though their long dress, says the chronicler, was terribly in the way. They wrenched away or snapped asunder the long Greek lances, and made play with their hangers. Mardonius, conspicuous on a white horse, like Ney at Waterloo, was the "bravest of the brave." But at last a cry rose that Mardonius was down, and at that cry the Persians wavered, and fled in wild disorder to the great stockade



which had been built to protect their camp. But Artabazus, who had now come up, had kept his forty thousand men in hand when he saw the scramble of the attack; and when he saw the repulse, he made no attempt to save the day, but faced about and at once began an orderly retreat on the Hellespont. Some of the Greeks who had joined the Persian king fought desperately in their miserable cause. Three hundred noble Thebans are said to have fallen in the front of the battle. This may have been the "Sacred Band" which fought under Epaminondas in later history, and which consisted of friends sworn to live and die together. These Thebans fought indeed "with halters round their necks:" for after the victory Pausanias insisted on the surrender of the chiefs of the late movement, and executed them all. When the Greeks who had made the mistake of retreating too far turned back in disorder to get their share of the glory poetical justice overtook them in the shape of a charge of the Persian and Theban cavalry, which stung them with the energy of a doomed swarm of wasps. They lost six hundred men, and were scattered to the heights of Cithæron. All was not yet over. A new battle began at the Persian camp, which vigorously repelled the onslaughts of the Spartans and their allies. It was not till the Athenians came up (who understood "wall-fighting," says Herodotus) that the day could be spoken of as finally decided. They managed to break or upset the "abattis," and the Tegeans again led the forlorn hope through it or over it. Then began the slaughter. Only three thousand were left alive of the whole Persian army. This seems incredible, especially in connection with the small number of the allies who fell in the action, as given by Herodotus. But the vanquished

were possibly impounded in their fortified camp, like the wretched Mamelukes whom Mehemet Ali destroyed in the court of a fortress.

The plunder was immense. The tent of Mardonius, with all the royal plate which the king had left him, his manger of bronze, gold and silver in all shapes, splendidly inlaid arms, vestments, horses, camels, beautiful women, became the dangerous prize of the needy Peloponnesians, who, to avert Nemesis, offered a tithe of all to the gods. Pausanias buried with due honors the body of the brave Mardonius, though he was strongly urged by an Æginetan of high rank to remember how that of Leonidas had been treated by Xerxes. "Would you have me humble my country in the dust, now that I have just raised her?" was the Spartan's answer. And he bid the proposer be thankful that he answered him only in words.

It seems to have been the invidious custom in all Greek battles to assign to one or two men the prize of valor, and our author always gives their names. The bravest of all was adjudged to be the Spartan Aristodemus, sole survivor of the glorious three hundred of Thermopylæ. He could not bear his life, and now lost it purposely; therefore he was refused the usual honors. Sophanes was proclaimed the bravest of the Athenians: he was in fact so brave that (perhaps adopting an idea from his experience afloat) he wore an anchor and chain, by which he moored himself to his post in action.\* It is a pity to lose our faith in so quaint an expedient; but there was another version of the story, says our honest chron-

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\* So the wounded at the battle of Clontarf, in Ireland, are said to have got themselves tied to stakes.

icler, that he bore an anchor as the device on his shield. The prudent Artabazus reached Byzantium safely, though he was roughly handled on the road by the Thracians and Macedonians, the latter of whom had been from the first favorable to the Greeks.

This "crowning mercy" of Plataea, as Cromwell would have called it, was supplemented by a brilliant action which took place on the same day at Mycalè, on the coast of Ionia.

When the season for navigation had come the Greek fleet under Leotychides, which had remained at Delos, pushed across to Samos, but the prey they had expected to find there had flown. The Persian fleet had placed itself under the protection of a land force of sixty thousand men under Tigranes, appointed by Xerxes governor of Ionia, and was drawn up on shore at Mycalè, protected by a rampart and palisade. The Greeks came provided with gangway boards, and all other appliances for naval action. But the Persians were morally seasick, therefore Leotychides disembarked his troops at his leisure. A mysterious rumor of a great victory in Bœotia, ascribed to some divine messenger, but possibly brought as a telegram by fire-signals, put the Greeks in heart. It was afternoon, and the field of Plataea had been fought in the morning. The Athenians were already engaged, when the Lacedæmonians came up, having to make a circuit by a rugged way intersected with ravines. As at Plataea, the Persians fought well as long as their rampart of bucklers stood upright; even when it gave way they broke up into clusters, which fought like wild boars at bay. The onset of the Athenians was the more furious that they feared to have their laurels snatched from them by their friends. They drove the Persians into their camp, and, more fortunate

than their brethren at Platæa, entered it pell mell with the flying enemy. The barbarian auxiliaries fled where they could, but the Persians themselves still held out desperately, until the Lacedæmonians came up and completed the defeat. Tigranes and Mardontes died as became Persian officers, fighting gallantly to the last. The Milesians in the Persian service, who had been posted to guard the passes of the mountain, turned on the fugitives and cut them up; for revolt became general among the Ionian Greeks as soon as the battle was over, and Samos, Chios, Lesbos, and other islands joined the confederacy for reprisals against Persia.

The Greek fleet now sailed to the Hellespont, where they found the bridge of boats destroyed. Then Leoty-chides went home with his Spartans, but the Athenians stayed and besieged Sestos, which held out till the autumn, when it was taken by famine. There had been a serious debate whether it would not be better to remove the Ionian colonists altogether, and settle them in Greece, than leave them to the future tender mercies of Persia. But the question was settled by the Athenians taking their Asiatic colonies into close league and alliance.

In those two memorable years, which end the narrative of Herodotus, Europe had established its preponderance over Asia forever. The last tableau of his great epic drama is almost lost in its blaze of glory, and it is time that the curtain should fall. It is true that Herodotus hardly recognizes this, and tries to amuse his readers for some time longer with the not very edifying court-scandal of Susa. Xerxes had infinite trouble with the ladies of his court. The fierce and jealous sultana Amestris, who treated her rival with such fiendish cruelty, may be the Vashti of the

Book of Esther, as Ahasuerus is supposed to be the Scriptural form of her husband's name. Nemesis was fully satisfied when Xerxes himself fell a victim to a palace intrigue; but this is not mentioned by Herodotus, nor that a statue of that dread Power was placed on the spot where he had been a spectator of the destruction of his fleet.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS.

IT has thus been attempted to give, in a succinct form, the general drift and character of the great work of Herodotus. In the original, his liquid and pellucid Ionian dialect constitutes one of the greatest charms of his style. In simple perspicuity he forms a remarkable contrast to the terse and gnarled Thucydides, who propounds so many puzzles to the classical scholar. But no ancient author is so profitable to read in a good translation. A good translation is like a good photograph, giving distinctive traits, and light and shade, but no life or color. Our attempt is a colored sketch on a small scale, and not a photograph, of a great book.

Herodotus may be considered, according to the standard of his time, as a decidedly veracious historian. And his veracity is of a kind that wears well. It is impossible to refuse to credit him with general impartiality; and if he erred at all, the modern reader will readily pardon his excessive sympathy with the Athe-

nians. Yet he does full justice to the gallantry, generosity, and other high qualities of the Persians. He was born, we must remember, a Persian subject—for Hali-carnassus did not recover its independence until he had grown up to manhood—and he could speak from experience of the masters of Ionia, that their rule was, on the whole, just and equal. His own town, indeed, had met with exceptional kindness from her liege lords. Hence he has none of the usual Greek contempt of and antipathy to “barbarians,” or people speaking an unknown tongue, which is a *primâ facie* reason for dislike with the vulgar of all nations. His great merit is that of Homer and Shakespeare, a broad catholicity of sentiment in observing and estimating character. He has the strongest sympathy with heroism whenever displayed, an exquisite feeling for humorous situations, and, as naturally connected with humor, intense pathos when the subject admits of it. He has the head of a sage, the heart of a mother, and the simple apprehension of a child. And if his style is redundant with a sort of Biblical reiteration, it is always clear and luminous. There can never be any mistake about his meaning, as long as no corruption has crept into his text, which, when it happens, is the fault of his transcribers, and not his own. His ethical portraits are above all invaluable, and, however fabulous the circumstances with which they are connected, must have been true to the life, from their evidently undesigned consistency. The benignant and vain Croesus, the ambitious Cyrus, the truculent Cambyzes, the chivalrous yet calculating Darius, the wild Cleomenes, the wise and wary Themistocles, the frantic Xerxes—the very type of the infatuation by which the divine vengeance wrought—these, and a host of other portraits of living men, can



only be compared in their verisimilitude with the immortal creations of Shakespeare.

Not a few pleasant anecdotes—mythical, ethical, social, and historical—as well as nearly all the minor affluents of the main stream of narrative, have been passed over or barely glanced at, for want of space. Some indelicacies have been softened in stories too good to omit, but this process leaves their spirit unchanged. For our author is always antique and always natural. When he errs against refinement, it is in a sort of infantine naughtiness—not with the perverse intention of a modern writer. Indeed, his high moral principle cannot fail to strike even a careless reader. His blood plainly boils at injustice or cruelty; and whatever superstition he may have inherited with his religious creed, he has an intense faith in an overruling Providence, which, spite of some anomalies which puzzle him, as they have done the wisest in all ages, does on the whole ordain that “the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth—much more the wicked and the sinner.’

END.

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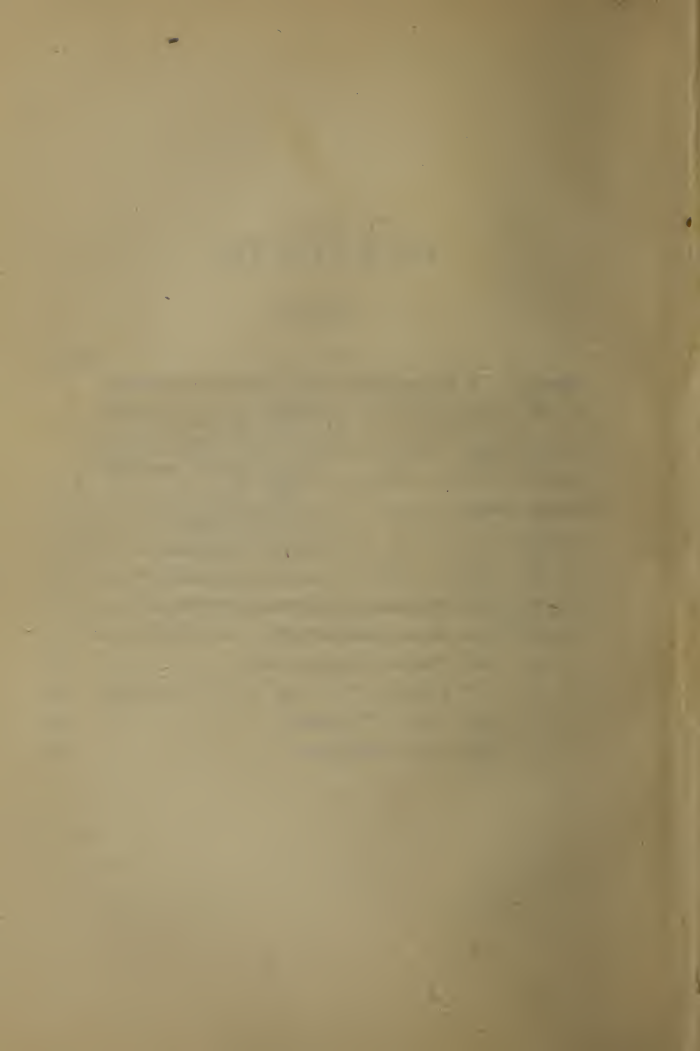
NEW YORK :  
JOHN B. ALDEN, PUBLISHER  
1883.

I HAVE to acknowledge my obligations to Mr. Forsyth's well-known "Life of Cicero," especially as a guide to the biographical materials which abound in his Orations and Letters. Mr. Long's scholarly volumes have also been found useful. For the translations, such as they are, I am responsible. If I could have met with any which seemed to me more satisfactory, I would gladly have adopted them. W. L. C.

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# CICERO.

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## CHAPTER I.

### EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION.

WHEN we speak, in the language of our title-page, of the "Ancient Classics," we must remember that the word "ancient" is to be taken with a considerable difference, in one sense. Ancient all the Greek and Roman authors are, as dated comparatively with our modern era. But as to the antique character of their writings, there is often a difference which is not merely one of date. The poetry of Homer and Hesiod is ancient, as having been sung and written when the society in which the authors lived, and to which they addressed themselves, was in its comparative infancy. The chronicles of Herodotus are ancient, partly from their subject-matter and partly from their primitive style. But in this sense there are ancient authors belonging to every nation which has a literature of its own. Viewed in this light, the history of Thucydides, the letters and orations of Cicero, are not ancient at all. Bede, and Chaucer, and Matthew of Paris, and Froissart, are far more redolent of antiquity. The several books which make up what we call the Bible are all ancient, no doubt; but even between the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel and the Epistles of St. Paul there is a far wider real interval than the mere lapse of centuries.

In one respect the times of Cicero, in spite of their complicated politics, should have more interest for a modern reader than most of what is called Ancient History. Forget the date but for a moment, and there is scarcely anything ancient about them. The scenes and actors are modern—terribly modern; far more so than the middle ages of Christendom. Between the times of our own Plantagenets and Georges, for instance, there is a far wider gap, in all but years, than between the consulships of Cæsar and Napoleon. The habits of life, the ways of thinking, the family affections, the tastes of the Romans of Cicero's day, were in many respects wonderfully like our own; the political jealousies and rivalries have repeated themselves again and again in the last two or three centuries of Europe; their code of political honor and morality, debased as it was, was not much lower than that which was held by some great statesmen a generation or two before us. Let us be thankful if the most frightful of their vices were the exclusive shame of paganism.

It was in an old but humble country house, near the town of Arpinum, under the Volscian hills, that Marcus Tullius Cicero was born, one hundred and six years before the Christian era. The family was of ancient "equestrian" \* dignity, but as none of its members had hitherto borne any office of state, it did not rank as "noble." His grandfather and his father had borne the same three names—the last an inheritance from some forgotten ancestor, who had either been successful in the cultivation of vetches (*cicer*), or, as less compliment-

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\*The *Equites* were originally those who served in the Roman cavalry; but latterly all citizens came to be reckoned in the class who had a certain property qualification, and who could prove free descent up to their grandfather.

ary traditions said, had a wart of that shape upon his nose. The grandfather was still living when the little Cicero was born; a stout old conservative, who had successfully resisted the attempt to introduce vote by ballot into his native town, and hated the Greeks (who were just then coming into fashion) as heartily as his English representative, fifty years ago, might have hated a Frenchman. "The more Greek a man knew," he protested, "the greater rascal he turned out." \* The father was a man of quiet habits, taking no part even in local politics, given to books, and to the enlargement and improvement of the old family house, which, up to his time, seems not to have been more than a modest grange. The situation (on a small island formed by the little river Fibrenus \*) was beautiful and romantic; and the love for it, which grew up with the young Cicero as a child, he never lost in the busy days of his manhood. It was in his eyes, he said, what Ithaca was to Ulysses,

"A rough, wild nurse-land, but whose crops are men."

There was an aptness in the quotation; for at Arpinum, a few years before, was born that Caius Marius, seven times consul of Rome, who had at least the virtue of manhood in him, if he had few besides.

But the quiet country gentleman was ambitious for his son. Cicero's father, like Horace's, determined to give him the best education in his power; and of course the best education was to be found in Rome, and the best teachers there were Greeks. So to Rome young Marcus

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\* Now known as Il Fiume della Posta. Fragments of Cicero's villa are thought to have been discovered built into the walls of the deserted convent of San Dominico. The ruin known as "Cicero's Tower" has probably no connection with him.

was taken in due time, with his younger brother Quintus. They lodged with their uncle-in-law, Aculeo, a lawyer of some distinction, who had a house in rather a fashionable quarter of the city, and moved in good society; and the two boys attended the Greek lectures with their town cousins. Greek was as necessary a part of a Roman gentleman's education in those days as Latin and French are with us now; like Latin, it was the key to literature (for the Romans had as yet, it must be remembered, nothing worth calling literature of their own); and like French, it was the language of refinement and the play of polished society. Let us hope that by this time the good old grandfather was gathered peacefully into his urn; it might have broken his heart to have seen how enthusiastically his grandson Marcus threw himself into this new-fangled study; and one of those letters of his riper years, stuffed full of Greek terms and phrases even to affectation, would have drawn anything but blessings from the old gentleman if he had lived to hear them read.

Young Cicero went through the regular curriculum—grammar, rhetoric, and the Greek poets and historians. Like many other youthful geniuses he wrote a good deal of poetry of his own, which his friends, as was natural, thought very highly of at the time, and of which he himself retained the same good opinion to the end of his life, as would have been natural to few men except Cicero. But his more important studies began after he had assumed the “white gown” which marked the emergence of the young Roman from boyhood into more responsible life—at sixteen years of age. He then entered on a special education for the bar. It could scarcely be called a profession, for an advocate's practice at Rome was gratuitous; but it was the best train-

ing for public life; it was the ready means, to an able and eloquent man, of gaining that popular influence which would secure his election in due course to the great magistracies which formed the successive steps to political power. The mode of studying law at Rome bore a very considerable resemblance to the preparation for the English bar. Our modern law-student purchases his admission to the chambers of some special pleader or conveyancer, where he is supposed to learn his future business by copying precedents and answering cases, and he also attends the public lectures at the Inns of Court. So at Rome the young aspirant was to be found (but at a much earlier hour than would suit the Temple or Lincoln's Inn) in the open hall of some great jurist's house, listening to his opinions given to the throng of clients who crowded there every morning; while his more zealous pupils would accompany him in his stroll in the Forum, and attend his pleadings in the courts, or his speeches on the Rostra, either taking down upon their tablets, or storing in their memories, his *dicta* upon legal questions.\* In such wise Cicero became the pupil of Mucius Scævola, whose house was called "the oracle of Rome"—scarcely ever leaving his side, as he himself expresses it; and after that great lawyer's death attaching himself in much the same way to a younger cousin of the same name and scarcely less reputation. Besides this, to arm himself at all points for his proposed career, he read logic with Diodotus the Stoic, studied the action of Æsop and Roscius—then the stars of the Roman stage—declaimed aloud like

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\* These dicta, or "opinions," of the great jurists acquired a sort of legal validity in the Roman law courts, like "cases" with us.

Demosthenes in private, made copious notes, practiced translation in order to form a written style, and read hard day and night. He trained severely as an intellectual athlete; and if none of his contemporaries attained such splendid success, perhaps none worked so hard for it. He made use, too, of certain special advantages which were open to him—little appreciated or at least seldom acknowledged by the men of his day—the society and conversation of elegant and accomplished women. In Scævola's domestic circle, where the mother, the daughters, and the granddaughters successively seem to have been such charming talkers that language found new graces from their lips, the young advocate learned some of his not least valuable lessons. "It makes no little difference," said he in his riper years, "what style of expression one becomes familiar with in the associations of daily life." It was another point of resemblance between the age of Cicero and the times in which we live—the influence of the "queens of society," whether for good or evil.

But no man could be completely educated for a public career at Rome until he had been a soldier. By what must seem to us a mistake in the republican system—a mistake which we have seen made more than once in the late American war—high political offices were necessarily combined with military command. The highest minister of state, consul or prætor, however hopelessly civilian in tastes and antecedents, might be sent to conduct a campaign in Italy or abroad at a few hours' notice. If a man was a heaven-born general, all went well; if not, he had usually a chance of learning in the school of defeat. It was desirable, at all events, that he should have seen what war was in his youth. Young Cicero served his first campaign, at the age of



eighteen, under the father of a man whom he was to know only too well in after life—Pompey the Great—and in the division of the army which was commanded by Sylla as lieutenant-general. He bore arms only for a year or two, and probably saw no very arduous service, or we should certainly have heard of it from himself; and he never was in camp again until he took the chief command, thirty-seven years afterwards, as proconsul in Cilicia. He was at Rome, leading a quiet student-life—happily for himself too young to be forced or tempted into an active part—during the bloody feuds between Sylla and the younger Marius.

He seems to have made his first appearance as an advocate when he was about twenty-five, in some suit of which we know nothing. Two years afterwards he undertook his first defense of a prisoner on a capital charge, and secured by his eloquence the acquittal of Sextus Roscius on an accusation of having murdered his father. The charge appears to have been a mere conspiracy, wholly unsupported by evidence; but the accuser was a favorite with Sylla, whose power was all but absolute; and the innocence of the accused was a very insufficient protection before a Roman jury of those days. What kind of considerations, besides the merits of the case and the rhetoric of counsel, did usually sway these tribunals, we shall see hereafter. In consequence of this decided success, briefs came in upon the young pleader almost too quickly. Like many other successful orators he had to combat some natural deficiencies; he had inherited from his father a somewhat delicate constitution; his lungs were not powerful, and his voice required careful management; and the loud declamation and vehement action which he had adopted from his models—and which were necessary conditions

of success in the large arena in which a Roman advocate had to plead—he found very hard work. He left Rome for a while, and retired for rest and change to Athens.

The six months which he spent there, though busy and studious, must have been very pleasant ones. To one like Cicero Athens was at once classic and holy ground. It combined all those associations and attractions which we might now expect to find in a visit to the capitals of Greece and of Italy, and a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Poetry, rhetoric, philosophy, religion—all, to his eyes, had their cradle there. It was the home of all that was literature to him; and there, too, were the great Eleusinian mysteries—which are mysteries still, but which contained under their veil whatever faith in the Invisible and Eternal rested in the mind of an enlightened pagan. There can be little doubt but that Cicero took this opportunity of initiation. His brother Quintus and one of his cousins were with him at Athens; and in that city he also renewed his acquaintance with an old schoolfellow, Titus Pomponius, who lived so long in the city, and became so thoroughly Athenian in his tastes and habits, that he is better known to us, as he was to his contemporaries, by the surname of Atticus, which was given him half in jest, than by his more sonorous Roman name. It is to the accidental circumstance of Atticus remaining so long a voluntary exile from Rome, and to the correspondence which was maintained between the two friends, with occasional intervals, for something like four-and-twenty years, that we are indebted for a more thorough insight into the character of Cicero than we have as to any other of the great minds of antiquity; nearly four hundred of his letters to Atticus, written in all the familiar confidence of private friendship by

a man by no means reticent as to his personal feelings, having been preserved to us. Atticus's replies are lost; it is said that he was prudent enough, after his friend's unhappy death, to reclaim and destroy them. They would perhaps have told us, in his case, not very much that we care to know beyond what we know already. Rich, luxurious, with elegant tastes and easy morality—a true Epicurean, as he boasted himself to be—Atticus had nevertheless a kind heart and an open hand. He has generally been called selfish, somewhat unfairly; at least his selfishness never took the form of indifference or unkindness to others. In one sense he was a truer philosopher than Cicero: for he seems to have acted through life on that maxim of Socrates which his friend professed to approve, but certainly never followed,—that “a wise man kept out of public business.” His vocation was certainly not patriotism; but the worldly wisdom which kept well with men of all political colors, and eschewed the wretched intrigues and bloody feuds of Rome, stands out in no unfavorable contrast with the conduct of many of her *soi-disant* patriots. If he declined to take a side himself, men of all parties resorted to him in their adversity; and the man who befriended the younger Marius in his exile, protected the widow of Antony, gave shelter on his estates to the victims of the triumvirate's proscription, and was always ready to offer his friend Cicero both his house and his purse whenever the political horizon clouded round him,—this man was surely as good a citizen as the noisiest clamorer for “liberty” in the Forum, or the readiest hand with the dagger. He kept his life and his property safe through all those years of peril and proscription, with less sacrifice of principle than many who

had made louder professions, and died—by a singular act of voluntary starvation, to make short work with an incurable disease—at a ripe old age; a godless Epicurean, no doubt, but not the worst of them.

We must return to Cicero, and deal somewhat briefly with the next few years of his life. He extended his foreign tour for two years, visiting the chief cities of Asia Minor, remaining for a short time at Rhodes to take lessons once more from his old tutor Molo the rhetorician, and everywhere availing himself of the lectures of the most renowned Greek professors to correct and improve his own style of composition and delivery. Soon after his return to Rome he married. Of the character of his wife Terentia very different views have been taken. She appears to have written to him very kindly during his long forced absences. Her letters have not reached us; but in all her husband's replies she is mentioned in terms of apparently the most sincere affection. He calls her repeatedly his "darling"—"the delight of his eyes"—"the best of mothers;" yet he procured a divorce from her, for no distinctly assigned reason, after a married life of thirty years, during which we find no trace of any serious domestic unhappiness. The imputations on her honor made by Plutarch, and repeated by others, seem utterly without foundation; and Cicero's own share in the transaction is not improved by the fact of his taking another wife as soon as possible—a ward of his own, an almost girl, with whom he did not live a year before a second divorce released him. Terentia is said also to have had an imperious temper; but the only ground for this assertion seems to have been that she quarreled occasionally with her sister-in-law Pomponia, sister of Atticus and wife of Quintus Cicero:

and since Pomponia, by her own brother's account, showed her temper very disagreeably to her husband, the feud between the ladies was more likely to have been her fault than Terentia's. But the very low notion of the married relations entertained by both the later Greeks and Romans helps to throw some light upon a proceeding which would otherwise seem very mysterious. Terentia, as is pretty plain from the hints in her husband's letters, was not a good manager in money matters; there is room for suspicion that she was not even an honest one in his absence, and was "making a purse" for herself; she had thus failed in one of the only two qualifications which, according to Demosthenes—an authority who ranked very high in Cicero's eyes—were essential in a wife, to be "a faithful house-guardian" and "a fruitful mother." She did not die of a broken heart; she lived to be 104, and, according to Dio Cassius, to have three more husbands. Divorces were easy enough at Rome, and had the lady been a rich widow there might be nothing so improbable in this latter part of the story, though she was fifty years old at the date of this first divorce.\*

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## CHAPTER II.

### PUBLIC CAREER.—IMPEACHMENT OF VERRES.

INCREASING reputation as a brilliant and successful pleader, and the social influence which this brought with it, secured the rapid succession of Cicero to the

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\* Cato, who is the favorite impersonation of all the moral virtues of his age, divorced his wife—to oblige a friend!

highest public offices. Soon after his marriage he was elected Quæstor—the first step on the official ladder—which, as he already possessed the necessary property qualification, gave him a seat in the Senate for life. The Ædileship and Prætorship followed subsequently, each as early, in point of age, as it could legally be held.\* His practice as an advocate suffered no interruption except that his Quæstorship involved his spending a year in Sicily. The Prætor who was appointed to the government of that province † had under

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\* The Quæstors (of whom there were at this time twenty) acted under the Senate as State treasurers. The Consul or other officer who commanded in chief during a campaign would be accompanied by one of them as paymaster-general.

The Ædiles, who were four in number, had the care of all public buildings, markets, roads, and the State property generally. They had also the superintendence of the national festivals and public games.

The duties of the Prætors, of whom there were eight, were principally judicial. The two seniors, called the "City" and "Foreign" respectively, corresponded roughly to our Home and Foreign Secretaries. These were all gradual steps to the office of Consul.

† The provinces of Rome, in their relation to the mother-state of Italy, may be best compared with our own government of India, or such of our crown colonies as have no representative assembly. They had each their governor or lieutenant-governor, who must have been an ex-minister of Rome: a man who had been Consul went out with the rank of "pro-consul,"—one who had been Prætor, with the rank of "pro-prætor." These held office for one or two years, and had the power of life and death within their respective jurisdictions. They had under them one or more officers who bore the title of Quæstor, who collected the taxes and had the general management of the revenues of the province. The provinces at this time were Sicily, Sardinia with Corsica, Spain and Gaul (each in two divisions); Greece, divided into Macedonia and Achaia (the Morea); Asia, Syria, Cilicia, Bithynia, Cyprus, and Africa in four divisions. Others were added afterwards, under the Empire.



him two quæstors, who were a kind of comptrollers of the exchequer; and Cicero was appointed to the western district, having his headquarters at Lilybæum. In the administration of his office there he showed himself a thorough man of business. There was a dearth of corn at Rome that year, and Sicily was the great granary of the empire. The energetic measures which the new Quæstor took fully met the emergency. He was liberal to the tenants of the State, courteous and accessible to all, upright in his administration, and, above all, he kept his hands clean from bribes and speculation. The provincials were as much astonished as delighted: for Rome was not in the habit of sending them such officers. They invented honors for him such as had never been bestowed on any minister before. No wonder the young official's head (he was not much over thirty) was somewhat turned. "I thought," he said, in one of his speeches afterwards—introducing with a quiet humor, and with all a practiced orator's skill, one of those personal anecdotes which relieve a long speech—"I thought in my heart, at the time, that the people at Rome must be talking of nothing but my quæstorship." And he goes on to tell his audience how he was undeceived.

"The people of Sicily had devised for me unprecedented honors. So I left the island in a state of great elation, thinking that the Roman people would at once offer me everything without my seeking. But when I was leaving my province, and on my road home, I happened to land at Puteoli just at the time when a good many of our most fashionable people are accustomed to resort to that neighborhood. I very nearly collapsed, gentlemen, when a man asked me what day I had left Rome, and whether there was any news stir-

ring? When I made answer that I was returning from my province—‘Oh! yes, to be sure,’ said he; ‘Africa, I believe?’ ‘No,’ said I to him, considerably annoyed and disgusted; ‘from Sicily.’ Then somebody else, with the air of a man who knew all about it, said to him—‘What! don’t you know that he was Quæstor at *Syracuse*?’ [It was at Lilybæum—quite a different district.] No need to make a long story of it; I swallowed my indignation, and made as though I, like the rest, had come there for the waters. But I am not sure, gentlemen, whether that scene did not do me more good than if everybody then and there had publicly congratulated me. For after I had thus found out that the people of Rome have somewhat deaf ears, but very keen and sharp eyes, I left off cogitating what people would hear about me; I took care that thenceforth they should see me before them every day: I lived in their sight, I stuck close to the Forum; the porter at my gate refused no man admittance—my very sleep was never allowed to be a plea against an audience.” \*

Did we not say that Cicéro was modern, not ancient? Have we not here the original of that Cambridge senior wrangler who, happening to enter a London theatre at the same moment with the king, bowed all round with a gratified embarrassment, thinking that the audience rose and cheered at *him*?

It was while he held the office of *Ædile* that he made his first appearance as public prosecutor, and brought to justice the most important criminal of the day. Verres, late *Prætor* in Sicily, was charged with high crimes and misdemeanors in his government. The grand scale of his offenses, and the absorbing interest

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\* Defence of Plancius, c. 26, 27.

of the trial, have led to his case being quoted as an obvious parallel to that of Warren Hastings, though with much injustice to the latter, so far as it may seem to imply any comparison of moral character. This Verres, the corrupt son of a corrupt father, had during his three years' rule heaped on the unhappy province every evil which tyranny and rapacity could inflict. He had found it prosperous and contented: he left it exhausted and smarting under its wrongs. He met his impeachment now with considerable confidence. The gains of his first year of office were sufficient, he said, for himself; the second had been for his friends; the third produced more than enough to bribe a jury.

The trials at Rome took place in the Forum—the open space, of nearly five acres, lying between the Capitoline and Palatine hills. It was the city market-place, but it was also the place where the population assembled for any public meeting, political or other—where the idle citizen strolled to meet his friends and hear the gossip of the day, and where the man of business made his appointments. Courts for the administration of justice—magnificent halls, called *basilicæ*—had by this time been erected on the north and south sides, and in these the ordinary trials took place; but for state trials the open Forum was itself the court. One end of the wide area was raised on a somewhat higher level—a kind of dais on a large scale—and was separated from the rest by the Rostra, a sort of stage from which the orators spoke. It was here that the trials were held. A temporary tribunal for the presiding officer, with accommodation for counsel, witnesses, and jury, was erected in the open air; and the scene may perhaps best be pictured by imagining the principal square

in some large town fitted up with open hustings on a large scale for an old-fashioned county election, by no means omitting the intense popular excitement and mob violence appropriate to such occasions. Temples of the gods and other public buildings overlooked the area, and the steps of these, on any occasion of great excitement, would be crowded by those who were anxious to see, at least, if they could not hear.

Verres, as a state criminal, would be tried before a special commission, and by a jury composed at this time entirely from the senatorial order, chosen by lot (with a limited right of challenge reserved to both parties) from a panel made out every year by the prætor. This magistrate, who was a kind of minister of justice, usually presided on such occasions, occupying the curule chair, which was one of the well-known privileges of high office at Rome. But his office was rather that of the modern chairman who keeps order at a public meeting than that of a judge. Judge, in our sense of the word, there was none; the jury were the judges both of law and fact. They were, in short, the recognized assessors of the prætor, in whose hands the administration of justice was supposed to lie. The law, too, was of a highly flexible character, and the appeals of the advocates were rather to the passions and feelings of the jurors than to the legal points of the case. Cicero himself attached comparatively little weight to this branch of his profession—"Busy as I am," he says in one of his speeches, "I could make myself lawyer enough in three days." The jurors gave each their vote by ballot,—“guilty,” “not guilty,” or (as in the Scotch courts) “not proven,”—and the majority carried the verdict.

But such trials as that of Verres were much more

like an impeachment before the House of Commons than a calm judicial inquiry. The men who would have to try a defendant of his class would be, in very few cases, honest and impartial weighers of the evidence. Their large number (varying from fifty to seventy) weakened the sense of individual responsibility, and laid them more open to the appeal of the advocates to their political passions. Most of them would come into court prejudiced in some degree by the interests of party; many would be hot partisans. Cicero, in his treatise on "Oratory," explains clearly for the pleader's guidance the nature of the tribunals to which he had to appeal. "Men are influenced in their verdicts much more by prejudice or favor, or greed of gain, or anger, or indignation, or pleasure, or hope or fear, or by misapprehension, or by some excitement of [their feelings, than either by the facts of the case, or by established precedents, or by any rules or principles whatever either of law or equity."

Verres was supported by some of the most powerful families at Rome. Peculation on the part of governors of provinces had become almost a recognized principle: many of those who held offices of state either had done, or were waiting their turn to do, much the same as the present defendant; and every effort had been made by his friends either to put off the trial indefinitely, or to turn it into a sham by procuring the appointment of a private friend and creature of his own as public prosecutor. On the other hand, the Sicilian families whom he had wronged and outraged, had their share of influence also at Rome, and there was a growing impatience of the insolence and rapacity of the old governing houses, of whose worst qualities the ex-governor of Sicily was a fair type. There were many reasons which would

lead Cicero to take up such a cause energetically. It was a great opening for him in what we may call his profession: his former connection with the government of Sicily gave him a personal interest in the cause of the province; and, above all, the prosecution of a state offender of such importance was a lift at once into the foremost ranks of political life. He spared no pains to get up his case thoroughly. He went all over the island collecting evidence; and his old popularity there did him good service in the work.

There was, indeed, evidence enough against the late governor. The reckless gratification of his avarice and his passions had seldom satisfied him, without the addition of some bitter insult to the sufferers. But there was even a more atrocious feature in the case, of which Cicero did not fail to make good use in his appeal to a Roman jury. Many of the unhappy victims had the Roman franchise. The torture of an unfortunate Sicilian might be turned into a jest by a clever advocate for the defence, and regarded by a philosophic jury with less than the cold compassion with which we regard the sufferings of the lower animals; but "to scourge a man that was a Roman and uncondemned," even in the far off province of Judea, was a thought which, a century later, made the officers of the great Empire, at its pitch of power, tremble before a wandering teacher who bore the despised name of Christian. No one can possibly tell the tale so well as Cicero himself; and the passage from his speech for the prosecution is an admirable specimen both of his power of pathetic narrative and scathing denunciation.

"How shall I speak of Publius Gavius, a citizen of Consa? With what powers of voice, with what force of language, with what sufficient indignation of soul, can



I tell the tale? Indignation, at least, will not fail me: the more must I strive that in this my pleading the other requisites may be made to meet the gravity of the subject, the intensity of my feeling. For the accusation is such that, when it was first laid before me, I did not think to make use of it; though I knew it to be perfectly true, I did not think it would be credible.—How shall I now proceed?—when I have already been speaking for so many hours on one subject—his atrocious cruelty; when I have exhausted upon other points well-nigh all the powers of language such as alone is suited to that man's crimes;—when I have taken no precaution to secure your attention by any variety in my charges against him,—in what fashion can I now speak on a charge of this importance? I think there is one way—one course, and only one, left for me to take. I will place the facts before you; and they have in themselves such weight, that no eloquence—I will not say of mine, for I have none—but of any man's, is needed to excite your feelings.

“This Gavius of Consa, of whom I speak, had been among the crowds of Róman citizens who had been thrown into prison under that man. Somehow he had made his escape out of the Quarries,\* and had got to Messina; and when he saw Italy and the towers of

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\* This was one of the state prisons at Syracuse, so called, said to have been constructed by the tyrant Dionysius. They were the quarries from which the stone was dug for building the city, and had been converted to their present purpose. Cicero, who no doubt had seen the one in question, describes it as sunk to an immense depth in the solid rock. There was no roof; and the unhappy prisoners were exposed there “to the sun by day, and to the rain and frosts by night.” In these places the survivors of the unfortunate Athenian expedition against Syracuse were confined, and died in great numbers.

Rhegium now so close to him, and out of the horror and shadow of death felt himself breathe with a new life as he scented once more the fresh air of liberty and the laws, he began to talk at Messana, and to complain that he, a Roman citizen, had been put in irons—that he was going straight to Rome—that he would be ready there for Verres on his arrival.

“The wretched man little knew that he might as well have talked in this fashion in the governor’s palace before his very face, as at Messana. For, as I told you before, this city he had selected for himself as the accomplice in his crimes, the receiver of his stolen goods, the confidant of all his wickedness. So Gavius is brought at once before the city magistrates; and, as it so chanced, on that very day Verres himself came to Messana. The case is reported to him; that there is a certain Roman citizen who complained of having been put into the Quarries at Syracuse; that as he was just going on board ship, and was uttering threats—really too atrocious—against Verres, they had detained him, and kept him in custody, that the governor himself might decide about him as should seem to him good. Verres thanks the gentlemen, and extols their goodwill and zeal for his interests. He himself, burning with rage and malice, comes down to the court. His eyes flashed fire; cruelty was written on every line of his face. All present watched anxiously to see to what lengths he meant to go, or what steps he would take; when suddenly he ordered the prisoner to be dragged forth, and to be stripped and bound in the open forum, and the rods to be got ready at once. The unhappy man cried out that he was a Roman citizen—that he had the municipal franchise of Consa—that he had served in a campaign with Lucius Pretius, a distinguished Roman knight, now engaged in

business at Panormus, from whom Verres might ascertain the truth of his statement. Then that man replies that he has discovered that he, Gavius, has been sent into Sicily as a spy by the ringleaders of the runaway slaves; of which charge there was neither witness nor trace of any kind, or even suspicion in any man's mind. Then he ordered the man to be scourged severely all over his body. Yes—a Roman citizen was cut to pieces with rods in the open forum at Messana, gentlemen; and as the punishment went on, no word, no groan of the wretched man, in all his anguish, was heard amid the sound of the lashes, but this cry,—‘I am a Roman citizen!’ By such protest of citizenship he thought he could at least save himself from anything like blows—could escape the indignity of personal torture. But not only did he fail in thus deprecating the insult of the lash, but when he redoubled his entreaties and his appeal to the name of Rome, a cross—yes, I say, a cross—was ordered for that most unfortunate and ill-fated man, who had never yet beheld such an abuse of a governor's power.

“O name of liberty, sweet to our ears! O rights of citizenship, in which we glory! O laws of Porcius and Sempronius! O privilege of the tribune, long and sorely regretted, and at last restored to the people of Rome! Has it all come to this, that a Roman citizen in a province of the Roman people—in a federal town—is to be bound and beaten with rods in the forum by a man who only holds those rods and axes—those awful emblems—by grace of that same people of Rome? What shall I say of the fact that fire, and red-hot plates, and other tortures were applied? Even if his agonized entreaties and pitiable cries did not check you, were you not moved by the tears and groans which burst from the Roman

citizens who were present at the scene? Did you dare to drag to the cross any man who claimed to be a citizen of Rome?—I did not intend, gentlemen, in my former pleading, to press this case so strongly—I did not indeed; for you saw yourselves how the public feeling was already imbittered against the defendant by indignation, and hate, and dread of a common peril.

He then proceeds to prove by witnesses the facts of the case and the falsehood of the charge against Gavius of having been a spy. “However,” he goes on to say, addressing himself now to Verres, “we will grant, if you please, that your suspicions on this point, if false, were honestly entertained.

“You did not know who the man was; you suspected him of being a spy. I do not ask the grounds of your suspicion. I impeach you on your own evidence. He said he was a Roman citizen. Had you yourself, Verres, been seized and led out to execution, in Persia, say, or in the farthest Indies, what other cry or protest could you raise but that you were a Roman citizen? And if you, a stranger there among strangers, in the hands of barbarians, among men who dwell in the farthest and remotest regions of the earth, would have found protection in the name of your city, known and renowned in every nation under heaven, could the victim whom you were dragging to the cross, be he who he might—and you did not know who he was—when he declared he was a citizen of Rome, could he obtain from you, a Roman magistrate, by the mere mention and claim of citizenship, not only no reprieve, but not even a brief respite from death?

“Men of neither rank nor wealth, of humble birth and station, sail the seas; they touch at some spot they never saw before, where they are neither personally

known to those whom they visit, nor can always find any to vouch for their nationality. But in this single fact of their citizenship they feel they shall be safe, not only with our own governors, who are held in check by the terror of the laws and of public opinion—not only among those who share that citizenship of Rome, and who are united with them by community of language, of laws, and of many things besides—but go where they may, this, they think, will be their safeguard. Take away this confidence, destroy this safeguard for our Roman citizens—once establish the principle that there is no protection in the words, “I am a citizen of Rome”—that prætor or other magistrate may with impunity sentence to what punishment he will a man who says he is a Roman citizen, merely because somebody does not know it for a fact; and at once, by admitting such a defense, you are shutting up against our Roman citizens all our provinces, all foreign states, despotic or independent—all the whole world, in short, which has ever lain open to our national enterprise beyond all.”

He turns again to Verres.

“But why talk of Gavius? as though it were Gavius on whom you were wreaking a private vengeance instead of rather raging war against the very name and rights of Roman citizenship. You showed yourself an enemy, I say, not to the individual man, but to the common cause of liberty. For what meant it that, when the authorities of Messana, according to their usual custom, would have erected the cross behind their city on the Pompeian road, you ordered it to be set up on the side that looked toward the Strait? Nay, and added this—which you cannot deny, which you said openly in the hearing of all—that you chose that

spot for this reason, that as he had called himself a Roman citizen, he might be able, from his cross of punishment, to see in the distance his country and his home! And so, gentlemen, that cross was the only one, since Messana was a city, that was ever erected on that spot. A point which commanded a view of Italy was chosen by the defendant for the express reason that the dying sufferer, in his last agony and torment, might see how the rights of the slave and the freeman were separated by that narrow streak of sea; that Italy might look upon a son of hers suffering the capital penalty reserved for slaves alone.

“It is a crime to put a citizen of Rome in bonds; it is an atrocity to scourge him; to put him to death is well-nigh parricide; what shall I say it is to crucify him?—Language has no word by which I may designate such an enormity. Yet with all this you man was not content. ‘Let him look,’ said he, ‘towards his country; let him die in full sight of freedom and the laws.’ It was not Gavius; it was not a single victim unknown to fame, a mere individual Roman citizen; it was the common cause of liberty, the common rights of citizenship, which you there outraged and put to a shameful death.”

But in order to judge of the thrilling effect of such passages upon a Roman jury, they must be read in the grand periods of the oration itself; to which no translation into a language so different in idiom and rhythm as English is from Latin can possibly do justice. The fruitless appeal made by the unhappy citizen to the outraged majesty of Rome, and the indignant demand for vengeance, which the great orator founds upon it—proclaiming the recognized principle that, in every quarter of the world, the humblest wanderer who could say he



was a Roman citizen should find protection in the name—will be always remembered as having supplied Lord Palmerston with one of his most telling illustrations. But this great speech of Cicero's—perhaps the most magnificent piece of declamation in any language—though written and preserved to us, was never spoken. The whole of the pleadings in the case, which extend to some length, were composed for the occasion, no doubt, in substance, and we have to thank Cicero for publishing them afterwards in full. But Verres only waited to hear the brief opening speech of his prosecutor; he did not dare to challenge a verdict, but allowing judgment to go by default, withdrew to Marseilles soon after the trial opened. He lived there, undisturbed in the enjoyment of his plunder, long enough to see the fall and assassination of his great accuser, but only (as it is said) to share his fate soon afterwards as one of the victims of Antony's proscription. Of his guilt there can be no question; his fear to face a court in which he had many friends is sufficient presumptive evidence of it; but we must hesitate in assuming the deepness of its dye from the terrible invectives of Cicero. No sensible person will form an opinion upon the real merits of a case, even in an English court of justice now, entirely from the speech of the counsel for the prosecution. And if we were to go back a century or two, to the state trials of those days, we know that to form our estimate of a prisoner's guilt from such data only would be doing him a gross injustice. We have only to remember the exclamation of Warren Hastings himself, whose trial, as has been said, has so many points of resemblance with that of Verres, when Burke sat down after the torrent of eloquence which he had hurled against the accused in his opening speech for the prosecution: "I thought

myself for the moment," said Hastings, "the guiltiest man in England."

The result of this trial was to raise Cicero at once to the leadership—if so modern an expression may be used—of the Roman bar. Up to this time the position had been held by Hortensius, the counsel for Verres, whom Cicero himself calls "the king of the courts." He was eight years the senior of Cicero in age, and many more professionally, for he is said to have made his first public speech at nineteen. He had the advantage of the most extraordinary memory, a musical voice, and a rich flow of language: but Cicero more than implies that he was not above bribing a jury. It was not more disgraceful in those days than bribing a voter in our own. The two men were very unlike in one respect; Hortensius was a fop and an exquisite (he is said to have brought an action against a colleague for disarranging the folds of his gown), while Cicero's vanity was quite of another kind. After Verres's trial, the two advocates were frequently engaged together in the same cause and on the same side: but Hortensius seems quietly to have abdicated his forensic sovereignty before the rising fame of his younger rival. They became, ostensibly at least, personal friends. What jealousy there was between them, strange to say, seems always to have been on the side of Cicero, who could not be convinced of the friendly feeling which, on Hortensius's part, there seems no reason to doubt. After his rival's death, however, Cicero did full justice to his merits and his eloquence, and even inscribed to his memory a treatise on "Glory" which has been lost.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE CONSULSHIP AND CATILINE.

THERE was no check as yet in Cicero's career. It had been a steady course of fame and success, honestly earned and well deserved; and it was soon to culminate in that great civil triumph which earned for him the proud title of *Pater Patriæ*—the Father of his Country. It was a phrase which the orator himself had invented; and it is possible that, with all his natural self-complacency, he might have felt a little uncomfortable under the compliment, when he remembered on whom he had originally bestowed it—upon that Caius Marius, whose death in his bed at a good old age, after being seven times consul, he afterwards uses as an argument, in the mouth of one of his imaginary disputants, against the existence of an overruling Providence. In the prime of his manhood he reached the great object of a Roman's ambition—he became virtually Prime Minister of the republic: for he was elected, by acclamation rather than by vote, the first of the two consuls for the year, and his colleague, Caius Antonius (who had beaten the third candidate, the notorious Catiline, by a few votes only) was a man who valued his office chiefly for its opportunities of peculation, and whom Cicero knew how to manage. It is true that this high dignity—so jealous were the old republican principles of individual power—would last only for a year; but that year was to be a most eventful one, both for Cicero and for Rome. The terrible days of Marius and Sylla had passed, only to leave behind a taste for blood and licence among the corrupt aristocracy and turbulent commons. There were men among the younger nobles quite ready to risk

their lives in the struggle for absolute power; and the mob was ready to follow whatever leader was bold enough to bid highest for their support.

It is impossible here to do much more than glance at the well-known story of Catiline's conspiracy. It was the attempt of an able and desperate man to make himself and his partisans masters of Rome by a bloody revolution. Catiline was a member of a noble but impoverished family, who had borne arms under Sylla, and had served an early apprenticeship in bloodshed under that unscrupulous leader. Cicero has described his character in terms which probably are not unfair, because the portrait was drawn by him, in the course of his defence of a young friend who had been too much connected with Catiline, for the distinct purpose of showing the popular qualities which had dazzled and attracted so many of the youth of Rome.

“He had about him very many of, I can hardly say the visible tokens, but the adumbrations of the highest qualities. There was in his character that which tempted him to indulge the worst passions, but also that which spurred him to energy and hard work. Licentious appetites burnt fiercely within him, but there was also a strong love of active military service. I believe that there never lived on earth such a monster of inconsistency—such a compound of opposite tastes and passions brought into conflict with each other. Who at one time was a greater favorite with our most illustrious men? Who was a closer intimate with our very basest? Who could be more greedy of money than he was? Who could lavish it more profusely? There were these marvellous qualities in the man—he made friends so universally, he retained them by his obliging ways, he was ready to share what he had with them all,

to help them at their need with his money, his influence, his personal exertions—not stopping short of the most audacious crime, if there was need of it. He could change his very nature, and rule himself by circumstances, and turn and bend in any direction. He lived soberly with the serious, he was a boon companion with the gay; grave with the elders, merry with the young; reckless among the desperate, profligate with the depraved. With a nature so complex and many-sided, he not only collected round him wicked and desperate characters from all quarters of the world, but he also attracted many brave and good men by his simulation of virtue. It would have been impossible for him to have organized that atrocious attack upon the Commonwealth, unless that fierce outgrowth of depraved passions had rested on some under-stratum of agreeable qualities and powers of endurance.”

Born in the same year with Cicero, his unsuccessful rival for the consulship, and hating him with the implacable hatred with which a bad, ambitious, and able man hates an opponent who is his superior in ability and popularity as well as character, Catiline seems to have felt, as his revolutionary plot ripened, that between the new consul and himself the fates of Rome must choose. He had gathered round him a band of profligate young nobles, deep in debt like himself, and of needy and unscrupulous adventurers of all classes. He had partisans who were collecting and drilling troops for him in several parts of Italy. The programme was assassination, abolition of debts, confiscation of property: so little of novelty is there in revolutionary principles. The first plan had been to murder the consuls of the year before, and seize the government. It had failed through his own impatience.

75 Quæstor  
70 Verres

Manilian-Pompey absolute  
unman in method

He now hired assassins against Cicero, choosing the opportunity of the election of the incoming consuls, which always took place some time before their entrance on office. But the plot was discovered, and the election was put off. When it did take place, Cicero appeared in the meeting, wearing somewhat ostentatiously a corslet of bright steel, to show that he knew his danger; and Catiline's partisans found the place of meeting already occupied by a strong force of the younger citizens of the middle class, who had armed themselves for the consul's protection. The election passed off quietly, and Catiline was again rejected. A second time he tried assassination, and it failed—so watchful and well informed was the intended victim. And now Cicero, perhaps, was roused to a consciousness that one or other must fall; for in the unusually determined measures which he took in the suppression of the conspiracy, the mixture of personal alarm with patriotic indignation is very perceptible. By a fortunate chance, the whole plan of the conspirators was betrayed. Rebel camps had been formed not only in Italy, but in Spain and Mauritania: Rome was to be set on fire, the slaves to be armed, criminals let loose, the friends of order to be put out of the way. The consul called a meeting of the Senate in the temple of Jupiter Stator, a strong position on the Palatine Hill, and denounced the plot in all its details, naming even the very day fixed for the outbreak. The arch-conspirator had the audacity to be present, and Cicero addressed him personally in the eloquent invective which has come to us as his "First Oration against Catiline." His object was to drive his enemy from the city to the camp of his partisans, and thus to bring matters at once to a crisis for which he now felt himself prepared.



This daily state of public insecurity and personal danger had lasted too long, he said:

“Therefore, let these conspirators at once take their side; let them separate themselves from honest citizens, and gather themselves together somewhere else; let them put a wall between us, as I have often said. Let us have them no longer thus plotting the assassination of a consul in his own house, overawing our courts of justice with armed bands, besieging the Senate-house with drawn swords, collecting their incendiary stores to burn our city. Let us at last be able to read plainly in every Roman’s face whether he be loyal to his country or no. I may promise you this, gentlemen of the Senate—there shall be no lack of diligence on the part of your consuls; there will be, I trust, no lack of dignity and firmness on your own, of spirit among the Roman knights, of unanimity among all honest men, but that when Catiline has once gone from us, everything will be not only discovered and brought into the light of day, but also crushed—ay, and punished. Under such auspices, I bid you, Catiline, go forth to wage your impious and unhallowed war—go, to the salvation of the state, to your own overthrow and destruction, to the ruin of all who have joined you in your great wickedness and treason. And thou, great Jupiter, whose worship Romulus founded here coeval with our city—whom we call truly the ‘Stay’\* of our capital and our empire—thou wilt protect thine own altars and the temples of thy kindred gods, the walls and roof-trees of our homes, the lives and fortunes of our citizens, from yon man and his accomplices. These enemies of all good men, invaders of their country,

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\* “Stator.”

plunderers of Italy, linked together in a mutual bond of crime and an alliance of villany, thou wilt surely visit with an everlasting punishment, living and dead!"

Catiline's courage did not fail him. He had been sitting alone—for all the other senators had shrunk away from the bench of which he had taken possession. He rose, and in reply to Cicero, in a forced tone of humility protested his innocence. He tried also another point. Was he—a man of ancient and noble family—to be hastily condemned by his fellow-nobles on the word of this "foreigner," as he contemptuously called Cicero—this *parvenu* from Arpinum? But the appeal failed; his voice was drowned in the cries of "traitor" which arose on all sides, and with threats and curses, vowing that since he was driven to desperation he would involve all Rome in his ruin, he rushed out of the Senate-house. At dead of night he left the city, and joined the insurgent camp at Fæsulæ.

When the thunders of Cicero's eloquence had driven Catiline from the Senate-house, and forced him to join his fellow-traitors, and so put himself in the position of levying open war against the state, it remained to deal with those influential conspirators who had been detected and seized within the city walls. In three subsequent speeches in the Senate he justified the course he had taken in allowing Catiline to escape, exposed further particulars of the conspiracy, and urged the adoption of strong measures to crush it out within the city. Even now, not all Cicero's eloquence, nor all the efforts of our imagination to realize, as men realized it then, the imminence of the public danger, can reconcile the summary process adopted by the consul with our English notions of calm and deliberate justice. Of the guilt of the men there was no doubt; most of them even

admitted it. But there was no formal trial; and a few hours after a vote of death had been passed upon them in a hesitating Senate, Lentulus and Cethegus, two members of that august body, with three of their companions in guilt, were brought from their separate places of confinement, with some degree of secrecy (as appears from different writers), carried down into the gloomy prison-vaults of the Tullianum,\* and there quietly strangled, by the sole authority of the consul. Unquestionably they deserved death, if ever political criminals deserved it: the lives and liberties of good citizens were in danger; it was necessary to strike deep and strike swiftly at a conspiracy which extended no man knew how widely, and in which men like Julius Cæsar and Crassus were strongly suspected of being engaged. The consuls had been armed with extra-constitutional powers, conveyed by special resolution of the Senate in the comprehensive formula that they "were to look to it that the state suffered no damage." Still, without going so far as to call this unexampled proceeding, as the German critic Mommsen does, "an act of the most brutal tyranny," it is easy to understand how Mr. Forsyth, bringing a calm and dispassionate legal judgment to bear upon the case, finds it impossible to reconcile it with our ideas of dignified and even-handed justice.† It was the hasty instinct of self-preservation, the act of a weak government uncertain of its very friends, under the influence of terror—a

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\* A state dungeon, said to have been built in the reign of Servius Tullius. It was twelve feet under ground. Executions often took place there, and the bodies of the criminals were afterwards thrown down the Gemoniam steps (which were close at hand) into the Forum, for the people to see.

† Life of Cicero, p 119.

terror for which, no doubt, there were abundant grounds. When Cicero stood on the prison steps, where he had waited to receive the report of those who were making sure work with the prisoners within, and announced their fate to the assembled crowd below in the single word "*Vixerunt*" (a euphemism which we can only weakly translate into "They have lived their life"), no doubt he felt that he and the republic held theirs from that moment by a firmer tenure; no doubt very many of those who heard him felt that they could breathe again, now that the grasp of Catiline's assassins was, for the moment at all events, off their throats; and the crowd who followed the consul home were sincere enough when they hailed such a vigorous avenger as the "Father of his Country." But none the less it was that which politicians have called worse than a crime—it was a political blunder; and Cicero came to find it so in after years; though—partly from his immense self-appreciation, and partly from an honest determination to stand by his act and deed in all its consequences—he never suffered the shadow of such a confession to appear in his most intimate correspondence. He claimed for himself ever afterwards the sole glory of having saved the state by such prompt and decided action; and in this he was fully borne out by the facts: justifiable or unjustifiable, the act was his; and there were burning hearts at Rome which dared not speak out against the popular consul, but set it down to his sole account against the day of retribution.

For the present, however, all went successfully. The boldness of the consul's measures cowed the disaffected, and confirmed the timid and wavering. His colleague Antonius—himself by no means to be depended on at this crisis, having but lately formed a coalition with

Catiline as against Cicero in the election for consuls—had, by judicious management, been got away from Rome to take the command against the rebel army in Etruria. He did not, indeed, engage in the campaign actively in person, having just now a fit of the gout, either real or pretended; but his lieutenant-general was an old soldier who cared chiefly for his duty, and Catiline's band—reckless and desperate men who had gathered to his camp from all motives and from all quarters—were a length brought to bay, and died fighting hard to the last. Scarcely a man of them, except the slaves and robbers who had swelled their ranks, either escaped or was made prisoner. Catiline's body—easily recognized by his remarkable height—was found, still breathing, lying far in advance of his followers, surrounded by the dead bodies of the Roman legionaries—for the loss on the side of the Republic had been very severe. The last that remained to him of the many noble qualities which had marked his earlier years was a desperate personal courage.

For the month that yet remained of his consulship, Cicero was the foremost man in Rome—and, as a consequence, in the whole world. Nobles and commons vied in doing honor to the saviour of the state. Catulus and Cato—men from whose lips words of honor came with a double weight—saluted him publicly by that memorable title of *Pater Patriæ*; and not only the capital, but most of the provincial towns of Italy, voted him some public testimony of his unrivaled services. No man had a more profound appreciation of those services than the great orator himself. It is possible that other men have felt quite as vain of their own exploits, and on far less grounds; but surely no man ever paraded his self-complacency like Cicero. His vanity

was indeed a thing to marvel at rather than to smile at, because it was the vanity of so able a man. Other great men have been either too really great to entertain the feeling, or have been wise enough to keep it to themselves. But to Cicero it must have been one of the enjoyments of his life. He harped upon his consulship in season and out of season, in his letters, in his judicial pleadings, in his public speeches (and, we may be sure, in his conversation), until one would think his friends must have hated the subject even more than his enemies. He wrote accounts of it in prose and verse, in Latin and Greek—and, no doubt, only limited them to those languages because they were the only ones he knew. The well-known line which provoked the ridicule of critics like Juvenal and Quintilian, because of the unlucky jingle peculiarly unpleasant to a Roman ear—

“O fortunatam natam me consule Romam!”

expresses the sentiment which—rhyme or no rhyme, reason or no reason—he was continually repeating in some form or other to himself and to every one who would listen.

His consulship closed in glory; but on his very last day of office there was a warning voice raised amid the triumph, which might have opened his eyes—perhaps it did—to the troubles which were to come. He stood up in the Rostra to make the usual address to the people on laying down his authority. Metellus Nepos had been newly elected one of the tribunes: it was his office to guard jealously all the rights and privileges of the Roman commons. Influenced, it is said, by Cæsar—possibly himself an undiscovered partisan of Catiline—he dealt a blow at the retiring consul under cover of a discharge of duty. As Cicero was about to



speak, he interposed a tribune's "veto"; no man should be heard, he said, who *had put Roman citizens to death without a trial*. There was consternation in the Forum. Cicero could not dispute what was a perfectly legal exercise of the tribune's power; only, in a few emphatic words which he seized the opportunity of adding to the usual formal oath on quitting office, he protested that his act had saved Rome. The people shouted in answer, "Thou hast said true!" and Cicero went home a private citizen, but with that hearty tribute from his grateful countrymen ringing pleasantly in his ears. But the bitter words of Metellus were yet to be echoed by his enemies again and again, until that fickle popular voice took them up, and howled them after the once popular consul.

Let us follow him for a while into private life; a pleasanter companionship for us, we confess, than the unstable glories of the political arena at Rome. In his family and social relations the great orator wins from us an amount of personal interest and sympathy which he fails sometimes to command in his career as a statesman. At forty-five years of age he has become a very wealthy man—has bought for something like £30,000 a noble mansion on the Palatine Hill; and besides the old-fashioned family seat near Arpinum—now become his own by his father's death—he has built, or enlarged, or bought as they stood, villas at Antium, at Formiæ, at Pompeii, at Cumæ, at Puteoli, and at half-a-dozen other places, besides the one favorite spot of all, which was to him almost what Abbotsford was to Scott, the home which it was the delight of his life to embellish—his country-house among the pleasant hills of Tusculum.\*

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\* Near the modern town of Frascati. But there is no certainty as to the site of Cicero's villa.

It had once belonged to Sulla, and was about twelve miles from Rome. In that beloved building and its arrangements he indulged, as an ample purse allowed him, not only a highly-cultivated taste, but in some respects almost a whimsical fancy. "A mere cottage," he himself terms it in one place; but this was when he was deprecating accusations of extravagance which were brought against him, and we all understand something of the pride which in such matters "apes humility." He would have it on the plan of the Academia at Athens, with its *palæstra* and open colonnade, where, as he tells us, he could walk and discuss politics or philosophy with his friends. Greek taste and design were as fashionable among the Romans of that day as the Louis Quatorze style was with our grandfathers. But its grand feature was a library, and its most valued furniture was books. Without books, he said, a house was but a body without a soul. He entertained for these treasures not only the calm love of a reader, but the passion of a bibliophile; he was particular about his bindings, and admired the gay colors of the covers in which the precious manuscripts were kept as well as the more intellectual beauties within. He had clever Greek slaves employed from time to time in making copies of all such works as were not to be readily purchased. He could walk across, too, as he tells us, to his neighbor's, the young Lucullus, a kind of ward of his, and borrow from the library of that splendid mansion any book he wanted. His friend Atticus collected for him everywhere—manuscripts, paintings, statuary; though for sculpture he professes not to care much, except for such subjects as might form appropriate decorations for his *palæstra* and his library. Very pleasant must have been the days spent together by the two

friends—so alike in their private tastes and habits, so far apart in their chosen course of life—when they met there in the brief holidays which Cicero stole from the law-courts and the Forum, and sauntered in the shady walks, or lounged in the cool library, in that home of lettered ease, where the busy lawyer and politician declared that he forgot for a while all the toils and vexations of public life.

He had his little annoyances, however, even in these happy hours of retirement. Morning calls were an infliction to which a country gentleman was liable in ancient Italy as in modern England. A man like Cicero was very good company, and somewhat of a lion besides; and country neighbors, wherever he set up his rest, insisted on bestowing their tediousness on him. His villa at Formiæ, his favorite residence next to Tusculum, was, he protested, more like a public hall. Most of his visitors, indeed, had the consideration not to trouble him after ten or eleven in the forenoon (fashionable calls in those days began uncomfortably early); but there were one or two, especially his next-door neighbor, Arrius, and a friend's friend, named Sebosus, who were in and out at all hours: the former had an unfortunate taste for philosophical discussion, and was postponing his return to Rome (he was good enough to say) from day to day in order to enjoy these long mornings in Cicero's conversation. Such are the doleful complaints in two or three of the letters to Atticus; but, like all such complaints, they were probably only half in earnest: popularity, even at a watering-place, was not very unpleasant, and the writer doubtless knew how to practice the social philosophy which he recommends to others, and took his place cheerfully and pleasantly in the society which he found about him—

not despising his honest neighbors because they had not all adorned a consulship or saved a state.

There were times when Cicero fancied that this rural life, with all its refinements of wealth and taste and literary leisure, was better worth living than the public life of the capital. His friends and his books, he said, were the company most congenial to him; "politics might go to the dogs;" to count the waves as they rolled on the beach was happiness; he "had rather be mayor of Antium than consul at Rome;" "rather sit in his own library with Atticus in their favorite seat under the bust of Aristotle than in the curule chair." It is true that these longings for retirement usually followed some political defeat or mortification; that his natural sphere, the only life in which he could be really happy, was in the keen excitement of party warfare—the glorious battle-field of the Senate and the Forum. The true key-note of his mind is to be found in these words to his friend Cœlius: "Cling to the city, my friend, and live in her light: all employment abroad, as I have felt from my earliest manhood, is obscure and petty for those who have abilities to make them famous at Rome." Yet the other strain had nothing in it of affectation or hypocrisy: it was the schoolboy escaped from work, thoroughly enjoying his holiday, and fancying that nothing would be so delightful as to have holidays always. In this, again, there was a similarity between Cicero's taste and that of Horace. The poet loved his Sabine farm and all its rural delights—after his fashion; and perhaps thought honestly that he loved it more than he really did. Above all, he loved to write about it. With that fancy, half-real, perhaps, and half-affected, for pastoral simplicity, which has always marked a state of over-luxuri-

ous civilization, he protests to himself that there is nothing like the country. But perhaps Horace discharges a sly jest at himself, in a sort of aside to his readers, in the person of Alphius, the rich city money-lender, who is made to utter that pretty apostrophe to rural happiness:—

“Happy the man, in busy schemes unskilled,  
Who, living simply, like our sires of old,  
Tills the few acres which his father tilled,  
Vexed by no thoughts of usury or gold.”

Martin's “Horace.”

And who, after thus expatiating for some stanzas on the charms of the country, calls in all his money one week in order to settle there, and puts it all out again (no doubt at higher interest) the week after. “*Orus, quando te apiciam!*” has been the cry of public men before and since Cicero's day, to whom, as to the great Roman, banishment from political life, and condemnation to perpetual leisure, would have been a sentence that would have crushed their very souls.

He was very happy at this time in his family. His wife and he loved one another with an honest affection; anything more would have been out of the natural course of things in Roman society at any date, and even so much as this was become a notable exception in these later days. It is paying a high honor to the character of Cicero and his household—and from all evidence that has come down to us it may be paid with truth—that even in those evil times it might have presented the original of what Virgil drew as almost a fancy picture, or one to be realized only in some happy retirement into which the civilized vices of the capital had never penetrated—

“Where loving children-climb to reach a kiss—  
A home of chaste delights and wedded bliss.” \*

His little daughter, Tullia, or Tulliola, which was her pet name (the Roman diminutives being formed somewhat more elegantly than ours, by adding a syllable instead of cutting short), was the delight of his heart; in his earlier letters to Atticus he is constantly making some affectionate mention of her—sending her love, or some playful message which his friend would understand. She had been happily married (though she was then but thirteen at the most) the year before his consulship; but the affectionate intercourse between father and daughter was never interrupted until her early death. His only son, Marcus, born after a considerable interval, who succeeded to Tullia’s place as a household pet, is made also occasionally to send some childish word of remembrance to his father’s old friend: “Cicero the Little sends his compliments to Titus the Athenian” —“Cicero the Philosopher salutes Titus the Politician.”† These messages are written in Greek at the end of the letters. Abeken thinks that in the originals they might have been added in the little Cicero’s own hand, “to show that he had begun Greek;” “a conjecture,” says Mr. Merivale, “too pleasant not to be readily admitted.” The boy gave his father some trouble in after life. He served with some credit as an officer of cavalry under Pompey in Greece, or at least got into no trouble there. Some years after, he wished to take ser-

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\* “*Intertia dulces pendent circum oscula nati;  
Casta pudicitiam servat domus* ”

—Georg. ii. 234.

† See “Letters to Atticus,” li. 9, 12; Merivale’s translation of Abeken’s “Cicero in Seinen Briefen,” p. 114.



vice in Spain, under Cæsar, against the sons of Pompey; but the father did not approve of this change of side. He persuaded him to go to Athens to study instead, allowing him what both Atticus and himself thought a very liberal income—not sufficient, however, for him to keep a horse, which Cicero held to be an unnecessary luxury. Probably the young cavalry officer might not have been of the same opinion; at any rate, he got into more trouble among the philosophers than he did in the army. He spent a great deal more than his allowance, and one of the professors, whose lectures he attended, had the credit of helping him to spend it. The young man must have shared the kindly disposition of his father. He wrote a confidential letter to Tiro, the old family servant, showing very good feeling, and promising reformation. It is doubtful how far the promise was kept. He rose, however, subsequently to place and power under Augustus, but died without issue; and, so far at least as history knows them, the line of the Ciceros was extinct. It had flashed into fame with the great orator, and died out with him.

All Cicero's biographers have found considerable difficulty in tracing, at all satisfactorily, the sources of the magnificent fortune which must have been required to keep up, and to embellish in accordance with so luxurious a taste, so many residences in all parts of the country. True, these expenses often led Cicero into debt and difficulties; but what he borrowed from his friends he seems always to have repaid, so that the money must have come in from some quarter or other. His patrimony at Arpinum would not appear to have been large; he got only some £3000 or £4000 dowry with Terentia; and we find no hint of his making money by any commercial speculations, as some Roman

gentlemen did. On the other hand, it is the barest justice to him to say that his hands were clean from those ill-gotten gains which made the fortunes of many of the wealthiest public men at Rome, who were criminals in only a less degree than Verres—peculation, extortion, and downright robbery in the unfortunate provinces which they were sent out to govern. Such opportunities lay as ready to his grasp as to other men's, but he steadily eschewed them. His declining the tempting prize of a provincial government, which was his right on the expiration of his prætorship, may fairly be attributed to his having in view the higher object of the consulship, to secure which, by an early and persistent canvass, he felt it necessary to remain in Rome. But he again waived the right when his consulship was over; and when, some years afterwards, he went unwillingly as proconsul to Cilicia, his administration there, as before in his lower office, in Sicily, was marked by a probity and honesty quite exceptional in a Roman governor. His emoluments, confined strictly within the legal bounds, would be only moderate, and, whatever they were, came too late in his life to be any explanation of his earlier expenditure. He received many valuable legacies at different times, from personal friends or grateful clients who died childless (be it remembered how the barrenness of the marriage union had become then, at Rome, as it is said to be in some countries now, the reproach of a sensual and effete aristocracy); he boasts himself, in one of his "Philippics," that he had received from this source above £170,000. Mr. Forsyth also notices the large presents that were made by foreign kings and states to conciliate the support and advocacy of the leading men at Rome—"we can hardly call them bribes, for in

many cases the relation of patron and client was avowedly established between a foreign state and some influential Roman: and it became his duty, as of course it was his interest, to defend it in the Senate and before the people." In this way, he thinks, Cicero held "retainers" from Dyrrachium; and, he might have added, from Sicily. The great orator's own boast was that he never took anything for his services as an advocate; and, indeed, such payments were forbidden by law.\* But with all respect for Cicero's material honesty, one learns from his letters unfortunately, not to put implicit confidence in him when he is in a boasting vein; and he might not look upon voluntary gifts, after a cause was decided, in the light of payment. Pætus, one of his clients, gave him a valuable library of books; and one cannot believe that this was a solitary instance of the quiet evasion of the Cincian law, or that there were not other transactions of the same nature which never found their way into any letter of Cicero's that was likely to come down to us.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### HIS EXILE AND RETURN.

WE must return to Rome. Cicero had never left it but for his short occasional holiday. Though no longer in office, the ex-consul was still one of the foremost

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\* The principle passed, like so many others, from the old Roman law into our own, so that to this very day, a barrister's fees being considered in the nature of an honorarium, or voluntary present made to him for his services, are not recoverable by law.

public men, and his late dignity gave him important precedence in the Senate. He was soon to be brought into contact, and more or less into opposition, with the two great chiefs of parties in whose feuds he became at length so fatally involved. Pompey and Cæsar were both gradually becoming formidable, and both had ambitious plans of their own, totally inconsistent with any remnant of republican liberty—plans which Cicero more or less suspected, and of that suspicion they were probably both aware. Both, by their successful campaigns, had not only acquired fame and honors, but a far more dangerous influence—an influence which was to overwhelm all others hereafter—in the affection of their legions. Pompey was still absent in Spain, but soon to return from his long war against Mithridates, to enjoy the most splendid triumph ever seen at Rome, and to take the lead of the oligarchical party just so long and so far as they would help him to the power he coveted. The enemies whom Cicero had made by his strong measures in the matter of the Catilinarian conspiracy now took advantage of Pompey's name and popularity to make an attack upon him. The tribune Metellus, constant to his old party watchword, moved in the Senate that the successful general, upon whom all expectations were centred, should be recalled to Rome with his army "to restore the violated constitution." All knew against whom the motion was aimed, and what the violation of the constitution meant; it was the putting citizens to death without a trial. The measure was not passed, though Cæsar, jealous of Cicero even more than of Pompey, lent himself to the attempt.

But the blow fell on Cicero at last from a very different quarter, and from the mere private grudge of a determined and unprincipled man. Publius Clodius,

a young man of noble family, once a friend and supporter of Cicero against Catiline, but who had already made himself notorious for the most abandoned profligacy, was detected, in a woman's dress, at the celebration of the rites of the Bona Dea—a kind of religious freemasonry amongst the Roman ladies, the mysteries of which are very little known, and probably would in any case be best left without explanation. But for a man to have been present at them was a sacrilege hitherto unheard of, and which was held to lay the whole city under the just wrath of the offended goddess. The celebration had been held in the house of Cæsar, as prætor, under the presidency of his wife, Pompeia; and it was said that the object of the young profligate was an intrigue with that lady. The circumstances are not favorable to the suspicion; but Cæsar divorced her forthwith, with the often-quoted remark that “Cæsar's wife must not be even suspected.” For this crime—unpardonable even in that corrupt society, when crimes of far deeper dye passed almost unproved—Clodius was, after some delay, brought to public trial. The defence set up was an *alibi*, and Cicero came forward as a witness to disprove it: he had met and spoken with Clodius in Rome that very evening. The evidence was clear enough, but the jury had been tampered with by Clodius and his friends; liberal bribery, and other corrupting influences of even a more disgraceful kind, had been successfully brought to bear upon the majority of them, and he escaped conviction by a few votes. But he never forgave the part which Cicero had taken against him; and from that time forth the latter found a new, unscrupulous, indefatigable enemy, of whose services his old opponents gladly availed themselves. Cicero himself for some

time underrated this new danger. He lost no opportunity of taunting the unconvicted criminal in the bitterest terms in the Senate, and of exchanging with him—very much to the detriment of his own character and dignity, in our modern eyes—the coarsest jests when they met in the street. But the temptation to a jest, of whatever kind, was always irresistible to Cicero: it was a weakness for which he more than once paid dearly, for they were remembered against him when he had forgotten them. Meanwhile Clodius—a sort of milder Catiline, not without many popular qualities—had got himself elected tribune; degrading himself formally from his own order of nobles for that purpose, since the tribune must be a man of the commons. The powers of the office were formidable for all purposes of obstruction and attack; Clodius had taken pains to ingratiate himself with all classes; and, the consuls of the year were men of infamous character, for whom he had found a successful means of bribery by the promise of getting a special law passed to secure them the choice of the richest provincial governments—those coveted fields of plunder—of which they would otherwise have had to take their chance by lot. When all was ripe for his revenge, he brought before the people in full assembly the following bill of pains and penalties: “Be it enacted, that whoever has put to death a Roman citizen uncondemned in due form of trial, shall be interdicted from fire and water.” Such was the legal form of words which implied banishment from Rome, outlawry, and social excommunication. Every man knew against whom the motion was leveled. It was carried—carried in spite of the indignation of all honest men in Rome, in spite of all Cicero’s humiliating efforts to obtain its rejection.



It was in vain that he put on mourning, as was the custom with those who were impeached of public crimes, and went about the streets thus silently imploring the pity of his fellow-citizens. In vain the whole of his own equestrian order, and in fact, as he declares, "all honest men" (it was his favorite term for men of his own party), adopted the same dress to show their sympathy, and twenty thousand youths of good family—all in mourning—accompanied him through the city. The Senate even met and passed a resolution that their whole house should put on mourning too. But Gabinius, one of the consuls, at once called a public meeting, and warned the people not to make the mistake of thinking that the Senate was Rome.

In vain, also, was any personal appeal which Cicero could make to the only two men who might have had influence enough to sway the popular vote. He was ostensibly on good terms both with Pompey and Cæsar; in fact, he made it his policy so to be. He foresaw that on their future course would probably depend the fate of Rome, and he persuaded himself, perhaps honestly, that he could make them "better citizens." But he trusted neither; and both saw in him an obstacle to their own ambition. Cæsar now looked on coldly, not altogether sorry at the turn which affairs had taken, and faintly suggested that perhaps some "milder measure" might serve to meet the case. From Pompey Cicero had a right to look for some active support; indeed, such had been promised in case of need. He threw himself at his feet with prayers and tears, but even this last humiliation was in vain; and he anticipated the execution of that disgraceful edict by a voluntary withdrawal into exile. Piso, one of

the consuls, had satirically suggested that thus he might "save Rome" a second time. His property was at once confiscated; his villas at Tusculum and at Formiæ were plundered and laid waste, the consuls claiming the lion's share of the spoil; and Clodius, with his armed mob, set fire to the noble house on the Palatine, razed it to the ground, and erected on the site a temple to—*Liberty!*

Cicero had friends who strongly urged him to defy the edict; to remain at Rome, and call on all good citizens to arm in his defense. Modern historians very generally have assumed that, if he could have made up his mind to such a course it would probably have been successful. He was to rely, we suppose, upon those "twenty thousand Roman youths"—rather a broken reed to trust to (remembering what those young gallants were), with Cæsar against him, now at the head of his legions just outside the gates of Rome. He himself seriously contemplated suicide, and consulted his friends as to the propriety of such a step in the gravest and most business-like manner, though, with our modern notions on the subject, such a consultation has more of the ludicrous than the sublime. The sensible and practical Atticus convinced him that such a solution of his difficulties would be the greatest possible mistake—a mistake, moreover, which could never be rectified.

But almost any course would have become him better than that which he chose. Had he remained and faced Clodius and his bravos manfully—or had he turned his back upon Rome forever, and shaken the dust off his feet against the ungrateful city, and become a noble pensioner upon Atticus at Buthrotum—he would have died a greater man. He wandered from place to place,

sheltered by friends whose unselfish loyalty marks their names with honor in that false and evil generation—Sica, and Flaccus, and Plancius—bemoaning himself like a woman,—“too blinded with tears to write,” “loathing the light of day.” Atticus thought he was going mad. It is not pleasant to dwell upon this miserable weakness of a great mind, which Cicero’s most eager eulogists admit, and which his detractors have not failed to make the most of. Nor is it easy to find excuse for him, but we will give him all the benefit of Mr. Forsyth’s defence:—

“Seldom has misfortune so crushed a noble spirit, and never, perhaps, has the ‘bitter bread of banishment’ seemed more bitter to any one than to him. We must remember that the love of country was a passion with the ancients to a degree which it is now difficult to realize, and exile from it, even for a time was felt to be an intolerable evil. The nearest approach to such a feeling was perhaps that of some favorite under an European monarchy, when, frowned upon by his sovereign, he was hurled from place and power, and banished from the court. The change to Cicero was indeed tremendous. Not only was he an exile from Rome, the scene of all his hopes, his glories, his triumphs, but he was under the ban of an outlaw. If found within a certain distance from the capital, he must die, and it was death to any one to give him food or shelter. His property was destroyed, his family was penniless, and the people whom he had so faithfully served were the authors of his ruin. All this may be urged in his behalf, but still it would have been only consistent with Roman fortitude to have shown that he possessed something of the spirit of the fallen archangel.”\*

His exile lasted nearly a year and a half. Long before that time there had come a reaction in his favor. The new consuls were well disposed towards him; Clodius’s insolence had already disgusted Pompey; Cæsar was absent with his legions in Gaul; his own

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\* Forsyth’s *Life of Cicero*, p. 190.

friends, who had all along been active in his favor (though in his querulous mood he accused them of apathy) took advantage of the change, his generous rival Hortensius being amongst the most active; and all the frantic violence of Clodius and his party served only to delay for a while the return which they could not prevent. A motion for his recall was carried at last by an immense majority.

Cicero had one remarkable ally on that occasion. On one of the days when the Senate was known to be discussing his recall, the 'Andromache' of Ennius was being played in the theatre. The popular actor Æsop, whose name has come down to us in conjunction with that of Roscius, was playing the principal character. The great orator had been his pupil, and was evidently regarded by him as a personal friend. With all the force of his consummate art, he threw into Andromache's lament for her absent father his own feelings for Cicero. The words in the part were strikingly appropriate, and he did not hesitate to insert a phrase or two of his own when he came to speak of the man

"Who with a constant mind upheld the state,  
Stood on the people's side in perilous times,  
Ne'er recked of his own life, nor spared himself."

So significant and emphatic were his tone and gesture as he addressed himself pointedly to his Roman audience, that they recalled him, and, amid a storm of plaudits, made him repeat the passage. He added to it the words—which were not set down for him—

"Best of all friends in direst strait of war!"

and the applause was redoubled. The actor drew courage from his success. When, as the play went on, he came to speak the words—

^ And you—you let him live a banished man—  
See him driven forth and hunted from your gates!"

he pointed to the nobles, knights, and commons, as they sat in their respective seats in the crowded rows before him, his own voice broke with grief, and the tears even more than the applause of the whole audience bore witness alike to their feelings towards the exile, and the dramatic power of the actor. "He pleaded my cause before the Roman people," says Cicero (for it is he that tells the story), "with far more weight of eloquence than I could have pleaded for myself." \*

He had been visited with a remarkable dream, while staying with one of his friends in Italy, during the earlier days of his exile, which he now recalled with some interest. He tells us this story also himself, though he puts it into the mouth of another speaker, in his dialogue on "Divination." If few were so fond of introducing personal anecdotes into every place where he could find room for them, fewer still could tell them so well.

"I had lain awake a great part of the night, and at last towards dawn had begun to sleep soundly and heavily. I had given orders to my attendant that, in this case, though we had to start that very morning, strict silence should be kept, and that I was on no account to be disturbed; when about seven o'clock I awoke, and told him my dream. I thought I was wandering alone in some solitary place, when Caius Marius appeared to me, with his fasces bound with laurel, and asked why I was so sad? And when I answered that I had been driven from my country, he caught my

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\* Defence of Sestius. c. 56. etc.

hand, bade me be of good cheer, and put me under the guidance of his own lictor to lead me to his monument; there, he said, I should find my deliverance."

So indeed it had turned out. The temple dedicated to Honor and Virtue, in which the Senate sat when they passed the first resolution of Cicero's recall, was known as the "Monument of Marius." There is no need to doubt the perfect good faith of the story which he tells, and it may be set down as one of the earliest authenticated instances of a dream coming true. But if dreams are fashioned out of our waking imaginations, it is easy to believe that the fortunes of his great townsman Marius, and the scenes in the Senate at Rome, were continually present to the exile's thoughts.

His return was a triumphal progress. He landed at Brundisium on his daughter's birthday. She had only just lost her husband Piso, who had gallantly maintained her father's cause throughout, but she was the first to welcome him with tears of joy which overmastered her sorrow. He was careful to lose no chance of making his return impressive. He took his way to Rome with the slow march of a conqueror. The journey which Horace made easily in twelve days, occupied Cicero twenty-four. But he chose not the shortest but the most public route, through Naples, Capua, Minturnæ, Terracina, and Aricia.

Let him tell the story of his own reception. If he tells it (as he does more than once) with an undisguised pride, it is a pride with which it is impossible not to sympathize. He boasted afterwards that he had been "carried back to Rome on the shoulders of Italy;" and Plutarch says it was a boast he had good right to make.



“Who does not know what my return home was like? How the people of Brundisium held out to me, as I might say, the right hand of welcome on behalf of all my native land? From thence to Rome my progress was like a march of all Italy. There was no district, no town, corporation, or colony, from which a public deputation was not sent to congratulate me. Why need I speak of my arrival at each place? how the people crowded the streets in the towns; how they flocked in from the country—fathers of families with wives and children? How can I describe those days, when all kept holiday, as though it were some high festival of the immortal gods, in joy for my safe return? That single day was to me like immortality; when I returned to my own city, when I saw the Senate and the population of all ranks come forth to greet me, when Rome herself looked as though she had wrenched herself from her foundations to rush to embrace her preserver. For she received me in such sort, that not only all sexes, ages, and callings, men and women, of every rank and degree, but even the very walls, the houses, the temples, seemed to share the universal joy.”

The Senate in a body came out to receive him on the Appian road; a gilded chariot waited for him at the city gates; the lower class of citizens crowded the steps of the temples to see him as he passed; and so he rode, escorted by troops of friends, more than a conqueror, to the Capitol.

His exultation was naturally as intense as his despair had been. He made two of his most florid speeches (if indeed they be his, which is doubtful), one in the Senate and another to the people assembled in the Forum, in which he congratulated himself on his return, and Rome on having regained her most

illustrious citizen. It is a curious note of the temper and logical capacities of the mob, in all ages of the world alike, that within a few hours of their applauding to the echo this speech of Cicero's, Clodius succeeded in exciting them to a serious riot by appealing to the ruinous price of corn as one of the results of the exile's return.

For nearly four years more, though unable to shake Cicero's recovered position in the state—for he was now supported by Pompey—Clodius and his partisans, backed by a strong force of trained gladiators in their pay, kept Rome in a state of anarchy which is almost inexplicable. It was more than suspected that Crassus, now utterly estranged from Pompey, supplied out of his enormous wealth the means of keeping on foot this lawless agitation. Elections were overawed, meetings of the Senate interrupted, assassinations threatened and attempted. Already men began to look to military rule, and to think a good cause none the worse for being backed by "strong battalions." Things were fast tending to the point where Pompey and Cæsar, trusty allies as yet in profession and appearance, deadly rivals at heart, hoped to step in with their veteran legions. Even Cicero, the man of peace and constitutional statesman, felt comfort in the thought that this final argument could be resorted to by his own party. But Clodius's mob-government, at any rate, was to be put an end to somewhat suddenly. Milo, now one of the candidates for the consulship, a man of determined and unscrupulous character, had turned his own weapons against him, and maintained an opposition patrol of hired gladiators and wild-beast fighters. The Senate quite approved, if they did not openly sanction, this irregular championship of their order. The two par-

ties walked the streets of Rome like the Capulets and Montagues at Verona; and it was said that Milo had been heard to swear that he would rid the city of Clodius if he ever got the chance. It came at last, in a casual meeting on the Appian road, near Bovillæ. A scuffle began between their retainers, and Clodius was killed—his friends said, murdered. The excitement at Rome was intense; the dead body was carried and laid publicly on the Rostra. Riots ensued; Milo was obliged to fly, and renounce his hopes of power; and the Senate, intimidated, named Pompey—not indeed “Dictator,” for the name had become almost as hateful as that of King—but sole consul, for the safety of the state.

Cicero had resumed his practice as an advocate, and was now called upon to defend Milo. But Pompey, either from some private grudge, or in order to win favor with the populace, determined that Milo should be convicted. The jury were overawed by his presence in person at the trial, and by the occupation by armed soldiers of all the avenues of the court under color of keeping order. It was really as great an outrage upon the free administration of justice as the presence of a regiment of soldiers at the entrance to Westminster Hall would be at a modern trial for high treason or sedition. Cicero affected to see in Pompey’s legionaries nothing more than the maintainers of the peace of the city. But he knew better; and the fine passage in the opening of his speech for the defense, as it has come down to us, is at once a magnificent piece of irony and a vindication of the rights of counsel.

“Although I am conscious, gentlemen, that it is a disgrace to me to show fear when I stand here to plead in behalf of one of the bravest of men;—and especially does such weakness ill become me, that when

Milo himself is far more anxious about the safety of the state than about his own, I should be unable to bring to his defence the like magnanimous spirit;— yet this strange scene and strangely constituted court does terrify my eyes, for, turn them where I will, I look in vain for the ancient customs of the Forum, and the old style of public trials. For your tribunal to-day is girt with no such audience as was wont; this is no ordinary crowd that hems us in. Yon guards whom you see on duty in front of all the temples, though set to prevent violence, yet still do a sort of violence to the pleader; since in the Forum and the court of justice, though the military force which surrounds us be wholesome and needful, yet we cannot even be thus freed from apprehension without looking with some apprehension on the means. And if I thought they were set there in hostile array against Milo, I would yield to circumstances, gentlemen, and feel there was no room for the pleader amid such a display of weapons. But I am encouraged by the advice of a man of great wisdom and justice—of Pompey, who surely would not think it compatible with that justice, after committing a prisoner to the verdict of a jury, then to hand him over to the swords of his soldiers; nor consonant with his wisdom to arm the violent passions of a mob with the authority of the state. Therefore those weapons, those officers and men, proclaim to us not peril but protection; they encourage us to be not only undisturbed but confident; they promise me not only support in pleading for the defence, but silence for it to be listened to. As to the rest of the audience, so far as it is composed of peaceful citizens, all, I know, are on our side; nor is there any single man among all those crowds whom you see occupying every point from

which a glimpse of this court can be gained, looking on in anxious expectation of the result of this trial, who, while he approves the boldness of the defendant, does not also feel that the fate of himself, his children, and his country, hangs upon the issue of to-day."

After an elaborate argument to prove that the slaying of Clodius by Milo was in self-defense, or, at the worst, that it was a fate which he well deserved as a public enemy, he closes his speech with a peroration, the pathos of which has always been admired:

"I would it had been the will of heaven—if I may say so with all reverence for my country, for I fear lest my duty to my client may make me say what is disloyal towards her—I would that Publius Clodius were not only alive, but that he were prætor, consul, dictator even, before my eyes had seen this sight! But what says Milo? He speaks like a brave man, and a man whom it is your duty to protect—'Not so—by no means,' says he. 'Clodius has met the doom he well deserved: I am ready, if it must be so, to meet that which I do not deserve.' . . . But I must stop; I can no longer speak for tears; and tears are an argument which he would scorn for his defence. I entreat you, I adjure you, ye who sit here in judgment, that in your verdict you dare to give utterance to what I know you feel."

But the appeal was in vain, or rather, as far as we can ascertain, was never made,—at least in such powerful terms as those in which we read it. The great advocate was wholly unmanned by the scene before him, grew nervous, and broke down utterly in his speech for the defence. This presence of a military force under the orders of Pompey—the man in whom he saw, as he hoped, the good genius of Rome—over-

awed and disturbed him. The speech which we read is almost certainly not that which he delivered, but as in the previous case of Verres, the finished and elaborate composition of his calmer hours. Milo was convicted by a large majority; in fact, there can be little doubt but that he was legally guilty, however political expediency might in the eyes of Cicero and his party, have justified his deed. Cato sat on the jury, and did all he could to insure an acquittal, showing openly his voting-paper to his fellow-jurors, with that scorn of the "liberty of silence" which he shared with Cicero.

Milo escaped any worse penalty by at once going into voluntary banishment at Marseilles. But he showed more practical philosophy than his advocate; for when he read the speech in his exile, he is said to have declared that "it was fortunate for him it was not spoken, or he should never have known the flavor of the red mullet of Marseilles."

The removal of Clodius was a deliverance upon which Cicero never ceased to congratulate himself. That "battle of Bovillæ," as he terms it, became an era in his mental records of only less significance than his consulship. His own public life continued to be honorable and successful. He was elected into the College of Augurs, an honor which he had long coveted; and he was appointed to the government of Cilicia. This latter was a greatness literally "thrust upon him," and which he would gladly have declined, for it took him away in these eventful days from his beloved Rome; and to these grand opportunities for enriching himself he was, as has been said, honorably indifferent. The appointment to a distant province was, in fact, to man like Cicero, little better than an honorable form of exile; it was like conferring on a man who had been,



and might hope one day to be again, Prime Minister of England, the governor-generalship of Bombay.

One consolation he found on reaching his new government—that even in the farthest wilds of Cilicia there were people who had heard of “the consul who saved Rome.” And again the astonished provincials marveled at a governor who looked upon them as having rights of their own, and neither robbed nor ill-used them. He made a little war, too, upon some troublesome hill-tribes (intrusting the command chiefly to his brother Quintus, who had served with distinction under Cæsar in Gaul), and gained a victory which his legions thought of sufficient importance to salute him with the honored title of “imperator.” Such military honors are especially flattering to men who, like Cicero, are naturally and essentially civilians; and to Cicero’s vanity they were doubly delightful. Unluckily they led him to entertain hopes of the further glory of a triumph; and this, but for the revolution which followed, he might possibly have obtained. As it was, the only result was his parading about with him everywhere, from town to town, for months after his return, the lictors with laureled fasces, which betokened that a triumph was claimed—a pompous incumbrance, which became, as he confessed, a grand subject for evil-disposed jesters, and a considerable inconvenience to himself.

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## CHAPTER V.

### CICERO AND CÆSAR.

THE future master of Rome was now coming home, after nearly ten years’ absence, at the head of the victo-

rious legions with which he had struck terror into the Germans, overrun all Spain, left his mark upon Britain, and "pacified" Gaul. But Cicero, in common with most of the senatorial party, failed to see in Julius Cæsar the great man that he was. He hesitated a little—Cæsar would gladly have had his support, and made him fair offers; but when the Rubicon was crossed, he threw in his lot with Pompey. He was certainly influenced in part by personal attachment: Pompey seems to have exercised a degree of fascination over his weakness. He knew Pompey's indecision of character, and confessed that Cæsar was "a prodigy of energy;" but though the former showed little liking for him, he clung to him nevertheless. He foreboded that, let the contest end which way it would, "the result would certainly be a despotism." He foresaw that Pompey's real designs were as dangerous to the liberties of Rome as any of which Cæsar could be suspected. "*Sullaturit animus*," he says of him in one of his letters, coining a verb to put his idea strongly—"he wants to be like Sulla." And it was no more than the truth. He found out afterwards, as he tells Atticus, that proscription-lists of all Cæsar's adherents had been prepared by Pompey and his partisans, and that his old friend's name figured as one of the victims. Only this makes it possible to forgive him for the little feeling that he showed when he heard of Pompey's own miserable end.

Cicero's conduct and motives at this eventful crisis have been discussed over and over again. It may be questioned whether at this date we are in any position to pass more than a very cautious and general judgment upon them. We want all the "state papers" and political correspondence of the day—not Cicero's letters only, but those of Cæsar and Pompey and Lentulus, and

much information besides that was never trusted to pen or paper—in order to lay down with any accuracy the course which a really unselfish patriot could have taken. But there seems little reason to accuse Cicero of double-dealing or trimming in the worst sense. His policy was unquestionably, from first to last, a policy of expedients. But expediency is, and must be more or less, the watchword of a statesman. If he would practically serve his country, he must do to some extent what Cicero professed to do—make friends with those in power. “*Sic vivitur*” —“So goes the world;” “*Tempori serviendum est*” —“We must bend to circumstances”—these are not the noblest mottoes, but they are acted upon continually by the most respectable men in public and private life, who do not open their hearts to their friends so unreservedly as Cicero does to his friend Atticus. It seemed to him a choice between Pompey and Cæsar; and he probably hoped to be able so far to influence the former as to preserve some shadow of a constitution for Rome. What he saw in those “dregs of a Republic,”\* as he himself calls it, that was worth preserving;—how any honest despotism could seem to him more to be dreaded than that prostituted liberty,—this is harder to comprehend. The remark of Abeken seems to go very near the truth—“His devotion to the Commonwealth was grounded not so much upon his conviction of its actual merits, as of its fitness for the display of his own abilities.”

But that commonwealth was past saving even in name. Within two months of his having been declared a public enemy, all Italy was at Cæsar’s feet. Before another year was past, the battle of Pharsalia

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\* “*Fæx Romuli.*”

had been fought, and the great Pompey lay a headless corpse on the sea-shore in Egypt. It was suggested to Cicero, who had hitherto remained constant to the fortunes of his party, and was then in their camp at Dyrrachium, that he should take the chief command, but he had the sense to decline; and though men called him "traitor," and drew their swords upon him, he withdrew from a cause which he saw was lost, and returned to Italy, though not to Rome.

The meeting between him and Cæsar, which came at last, set at rest any personal apprehensions from that quarter. Cicero does not appear to have made any dishonorable submission, and the conqueror's behavior was nobly forgetful of the past. They gradually became on almost friendly terms. The orator paid the dictator compliments in the Senate, and found that, in private society, his favorite jokes were repeated to the great man, and were highly appreciated. With such little successes he was obliged now to be content. He had again taken up his residence in Rome; but his political occupation was gone, and his active mind had leisure to employ itself in some of his literary works.

It was at this time that the blow fell upon him which prostrated him for the time, as his exile had done, and under which he claims our far more natural sympathy. His dear daughter Tullia—again married, but unhappily, and just divorced—died at his Tusculan villa. Their loving intercourse had undergone no change from her childhood, and his grief was for a while inconsolable. He shut himself up for thirty days. The letters of condolence from well-meaning friends were to him—as they so often are—as the speeches of the three comforters to Job. He turned in vain, as he pathetically says, to philosophy for consolation.

It was at this time that he wrote two of his philosophical treatises, known to us as "The True Ends of Life,"\* and the "Tusculan Disputations," of which more will be said hereafter. In this latter, which he named from his favorite country house, he addressed himself to the subjects which suited best with his own sorrowful mood under his recent bereavement. How men might learn to shake off the terrors of death—nay, to look upon it rather as a release from pain and evil; how pain, mental and bodily, may best be borne; how we may moderate our passions; and, lastly, whether the practice of virtue be not all-sufficient for our happiness.

A philosopher does not always find in himself a ready pupil. It was hardly so in Cicero's case. His arguments were incontrovertible; but he found them fail him sadly in their practical application to life. He never could shake off from himself that dread of death which he felt in a degree unusually vivid for a Roman. He sought his own happiness afterwards, as he had done before, rather in the exciting struggle of public life than in the special cultivation of any form of virtue; and he did not even find the remedy for his present domestic sorrow in any of those general moral reflections which philosophy, Christian as well as pagan, is so ready to produce upon such occasions; which are all so undeniable, and all so utterly unendurable to the mourner.

Cicero found his consolation, or that diversion of thought which so mercifully serves the purpose of consolation, where most men of active minds like his seek for it and find it—in hard work. The literary effort of writing and completing the works which have been just mentioned probably did more to soothe his mind than

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\* "De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum"—a title hard to translate.

all the arguments which they contained. He resumed his practice as an advocate so far as to plead a cause before Cæsar, now ruling as Dictator at Rome—the last cause, as events happened, that he was ever to plead. It was a cause of no great importance—a defence of Deiotarus, titular king of Armenia, who was accused of having entertained designs against the life of Cæsar while entertaining him as a guest in his palace. The Dictator reserved his judgment until he should have made his campaign against the Parthians. That more convenient season never came: for before the spring campaign could open, the fatal “Ides of March” cut short Cæsar’s triumphs and his life.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### CICERO AND ANTONY.

It remained for Cicero yet to take a part in one more great national struggle—the last for Rome and for himself. No doubt there was some grandeur in the cause which he once more so vigorously espoused—the recovery of the liberties of Rome. But all the thunders of Cicero’s eloquence, and all the admiration of modern historians and poets, fail to enlist our hearty sympathies with the assassins of Cæsar. That “consecration of the dagger” to the cause of liberty has been the fruitful parent of too much evil ever since to make its use anything but hateful. That Cicero was among the actual conspirators is probably not true, though his enemies strongly asserted it. But at least he gloried in the deed when done, and was eager to claim all the honors of a tyrannicide. Nay, he went farther than the actual con-



spirators, in words at least; it is curious to find him so careful to disclaim complicity in the act. "Would that you had invited me to that banquet on the Ides of March! there would then have been no leavings from the feast,"—he writes to Cassius. He would have had their daggers turned on Antony, at all events, as well as on Cæsar. He wishes that "the gods may damn Cæsar after he is dead;" professing on this occasion a belief in a future retribution, on which at other times he was sceptical. It is but right to remember all this, when the popular tide turned, and he himself came to be denounced to political vengeance. The levity with which he continually speaks of the assassination of Cæsar—a man who had never treated *him*, at any rate, with anything but a noble forbearance—is a blot on Cicero's character which his warmest apologists admit.

The bloody deed in the Capitol was done—a deed which was to turn out almost what Goethe called it—"the most absurd that ever was committed." The great Dictator who lay there alone, a "bleeding piece of earth," deserted by the very men who had sought of late to crown him, was perhaps Rome's fittest master; certainly not the worst of the many with whom a personal ambition took the place of principle. Three slaves took up the dead body of their master, and carried it home to his house. Poor wretches! they knew nothing about liberty or the constitution; they had little to hope, and probably little to fear; they had only a humble duty to do, and did it. But when we read of them, and of that freedman who, not long before, sat by the dead body of Pompey till he could scrape together wreck from the shore to light some sort of poor funeral-pile, we return with a shudder of disgust to those "noble

Romans" who occupy at this time the foreground of history.

Cæsar had been removed, but it is plain that Brutus and Cassius and their party had neither the ability nor the energy to make any real use of their bloody triumph. Cicero soon lost all hope of seeing in them the liberators of his country, or of being able to guide himself the revolution which he hoped he had seen begun. "We have been freed," he writes to Atticus, "but we are not free." "We have struck down the tyrant, but the tyranny survives." Antony, in fact, had taken the place of Cæsar as master of Rome—a change in all respects for the worse. He had surrounded himself with guards; had obtained authority from the Senate to carry out all decrees and orders left by the late Dictator; and when he could not find, among Cæsar's memoranda, materials to serve his purpose, he did not hesitate to forge them. Cicero had no power, and might be in personal danger, for Antony knew his sentiments as to state matters generally, and more particularly towards himself. Rome was no longer any place for him, and he soon left it—this time a voluntary exile. He wandered from place to place, and tried as before to find interest and consolation in philosophy. It was now that he wrote his charming essays on "Friendship" and on "Old Age," and completed his work "On the Nature of the Gods," and that on "Divination." His treatise "De Officiis" (a kind of pagan Whole Duty of Man) is also of this date, as well as some smaller philosophical works which have been lost. He professed himself hopeless of his country's future, and disgusted with political life, and spoke of going to end his days at Athens.

But, as before and always, his heart was in the Forum

at Rome. Political life was really the only atmosphere in which he felt himself breathe vigorously. Unquestionably he had also an earnest patriotism, which would have drawn him back to his country's side at any time when he believed she had need of his help. He was told that he was needed there now; that there was a prospect of matters going better for the cause of liberty; that Antony was coming to terms of some kind with the party of Brutus—and he returned.

For a short while these latter days brought with them a gleam of triumph almost as bright as that which had marked the overthrow of Catiline's conspiracy. Again, on his arrival at Rome, crowds rushed to meet him with compliments and congratulations, as they had done some thirteen years before. And in so far as his last days were spent in resisting to the utmost the basest of all Rome's bad men, they were to him greater than any triumph. Thenceforth it was a fight to the death between him and Antony; so long as Antony lived there could be no liberty for Rome. Cicero left it to his enemy to make the first attack. It soon came. Two days after his return, Antony spoke vehemently in the Senate against him, on the occasion of moving a resolution to the effect that divine honors should be paid to Cæsar. Cicero had purposely stayed away, pleading fatigue after his journey; really, because such a proposition was odious to him. Antony denounced him as a coward and a traitor, and threatened to send men to pull down his house about his head—that house which had once before been pulled down, and rebuilt for him by his remorseful fellow-citizens. Cicero went down to the Senate the following day, and there delivered a well-prepared speech, the first of those fourteen which are known to us as his "Philippics"—a name which he

seems first to have given to them in jest, in remembrance of those which his favorite model, Demosthenes, had delivered at Athens against Philip of Macedon. He defended his own conduct, reviewed in strong but moderate terms the whole policy of Antony, and warned him—still ostensibly as a friend—against the fate of Cæsar. The speaker was not unconscious what his own might possibly be.

“I have already, senators, reaped fruit enough from my return home, in that I have had the opportunity to speak words which, whatever may betide, will remain in evidence of my constancy in my duty, and you have listened to me with much kindness and attention. And this privilege I will use so often as I may without peril to you and to myself; when I cannot I will be careful of myself, not so much for my own sake as for the sake of my country. For me, the life that I have lived seems already wellnigh long enough, whether I look at my years or my honors; what little span may yet be added to it should be your gain and the state’s far more than my own.”

Antony was not in the house when Cicero spoke; he had gone down to his villa at Tibur. There he remained for a fortnight, brooding over his reply—taking lessons, it was said, from professors in the art of rhetorical self-defence. At last he came to Rome and answered his opponent. His speech has not reached us; but we know that it contained the old charges of having put Roman citizens to death without trial, in the case of the abettors of Catiline, and of having instigated Milo to the assassination of Clodius. Antony added a new charge—that of complicity with the murderers of Cæsar. Above all, he laughed at Cicero’s old attempts as a poet; a mode of attack which, if not so alarming,

was at least as irritating as the rest. Cicero was not present—he dreaded personal violence; for Antony, like Pompey at the trial of Milo, had planted an armed guard of his own men outside and inside the Senate-house. Before Cicero had nerved himself to reply, Antony had left Rome to put himself at the head of his legions, and the two never met again.

The reply, when it came, was the terrible second Philippic; never spoken, however, but only handed about in manuscript to admiring friends. There is little doubt, as Mr. Long observes, that Antony had also some friend kind enough to send him a copy; and if we may trust the Roman poet Juvenal, who is at least as likely to have been well-informed upon the subject as any modern historian, this composition eventually cost the orator his life. It is not difficult to understand the bitter vindictiveness of Antony. Cicero had been not merely a political opponent; he had attacked his private character (which presented abundant grounds for such attack) with all the venom of his eloquence. He had said, indeed, in the first of these powerful orations, that he had never taken this line.

“If I have abused his private life and character, I have no right to complain if he is my enemy; but if I have only followed my usual custom, which I have ever maintained in public life—I mean, if I have only spoken my opinion on public questions freely—then, in the first place, I protest against his being angry with me at all: or, if this be too much to expect, I demand that he should be angry with me only as with a fellow-citizen.”

If there had been any sort of reticence on this point hitherto on the part of Cicero, he made up for it in this

second speech. Nothing can equal its bitter personality, except perhaps its rhetorical power. He begins the attack by declaring that he will not tell all he knows—"in order that, if we have to do battle again hereafter, I may come always fresh-armed to the attack; an advantage which the multiplicity of that man's crimes and vices gives me in large measure." Then he proceeds:—

"Would you like us, then, to examine into your course of life from boyhood? I conclude you would. Do you remember that before you put on the robe of manhood, you were a bankrupt? That was my father's fault, you will say. I grant it—it is a defence that speaks volumes for your feelings as a son. It was your own shamelessness, however, that made you take your seat in the stalls of honorable knights, whereas by law there is a fixed place for bankrupts, even when they have become so by fortune's fault, and not their own. You put on the robe which was to mark your manhood—on your person it became the flaunting gear of a harlot."

It is not desirable to follow the orator through some of his accusations; when he had to lash a man whom he held to be a criminal, he did not much care where or how he struck. He even breaks off himself—after saying a good deal.

"There are some things, which even a decent enemy hesitates to speak of. . . . Mark, then, his subsequent course of life, which I will trace as rapidly as I can. For though these things are better known to you than even to me, yet I ask you to hear me with attention—as indeed you do; for it is right that in such cases men's feelings should be roused not merely by the knowledge of the facts, but by calling them back to their remem-



brance; though we must dash at once, I believe, into the middle of his history, lest we should be too long in getting to the end."

The peroration is noble and dignified, in the orator's best style. He still supposes himself addressing his enemy. He has warned Antony that Cæsar's fate may be his: and he is not unconscious of the peril in which his own life may stand.

"But do you look to yourself—I will tell you how it stands with me. I defended the Commonwealth when I was young—I will not desert it now I am old. I despised the swords of Catiline—I am not likely to tremble before yours. Nay, I shall lay my life down gladly if the liberty of Rome can be secured by my death, so that this suffering nation may at last bring to the birth that which it has long been breeding.\* If, twenty years ago, I declared in this house that death could never be said to have come before its time to a man who had been consul of Rome, with how much more truth, at my age, may I say it now! To me, indeed, gentlemen of the Senate, death may well be a thing to be even desired, when I have done what I have done and reaped the honors I have reaped. Only two wishes I have—the one, that at my death I may leave the Roman people free—the immortal gods can give me no greater boon than this; the other, that every citizen may meet with such reward as his conduct towards the state may have deserved."

The publication of this unspoken speech raised for the time an enthusiasm against Antony, whom Cicero now openly declared to be an enemy to the state. He hurled against him Philippic after Philippic. The ap-

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\* *I. e.*, the making away with Antony.

peal at the end of that which comes the sixth in order is eloquent enough.

“The time is come at last, fellow-citizens; somewhat too late, indeed, for the dignity of the people of Rome, but at least the crisis is so ripe, that it cannot now be deferred an instant longer. We have had one calamity sent upon us, as I may say, by fate, which we bore with—in such sort as it might be borne. If another befalls us now, it will be one of our own choosing. That this Roman people should serve any master, when the gods above have willed us to be the masters of the world, is a crime in the sight of heaven. The question hangs now on its last issue. The struggle is for our liberties. You must either conquer, Romans—and this, assuredly, with such patriotism and such unanimity as I see here, you must do—or you must endure anything and everything rather than be slaves. Other nations may endure the yoke of slavery, but the birthright of the people of Rome is liberty.”

Antony had left Rome, and thrown himself, like Catiline, into the arms of his soldiers, in his province of Cisalpine Gaul. There he maintained himself in defiance of the Senate, who at last, urged by Cicero, declared him a public enemy. Cæsar Octavianus (great-nephew of Julius) offered his services to the state, and with some hesitation they were accepted. The last struggle was begun. Intelligence soon arrived that Antony had been defeated at Mutina by the two last consuls of the Republic, Hirtius and Pansa. The news was dashed, indeed, afterwards by the further announcement that both consuls had died of their wounds. But it was in the height of the first exultation that Cicero addressed to the Senate his fourteenth Philippic—the last oration which he was ever to make. For

the moment, he found himself once more the foremost man at Rome. Crowds of roaring patriots had surrounded his house that morning, escorted him in triumph up to the Capitol, and back to his own house, as they had done in the days of his early glory. Young Cæsar, who had paid him much personal deference, was professing himself a patriot; the Commonwealth was safe again—and Cicero almost thought that he again himself had saved it.

But Rome now belonged to those who had the legions. It had come to that; and when Antony succeeded in joining interests with Octavianus (afterwards miscalled Augustus)—“the boy,” as both Cicero and Antony called him—a boy in years as yet, but premature in craft and falsehood—who had come “to claim his inheritance,” and succeeded in rousing in the old veterans of his uncle the desire to take vengeance on his murderers, the fate of the Republic and of Cicero was sealed.

It was on a little eyot formed by the river Reno, near Bologna, that Antony, young Cæsar, and Lepidus (the nominal third in what is known as the Second Triumvirate) met to arrange among themselves the division of power, and what they held to be necessary to the securing it for the future—the proscription of their several enemies. No private affections or interests were to be allowed to interfere with this merciless arrangement. If Lepidus would give up his brother, Antony would surrender an obnoxious uncle. Octavianus made a cheaper sacrifice in Cicero, whom Antony, we may be sure, with those terrible Philippics ringing in his ears, demanded with an eager vengeance. All was soon amicably settled; the proscription-lists were made out, and the Triumvirate occupied Rome.

Cicero and his brother—whose name was known to

be also on the fatal roll—heard of it while they were together at the Tusculan villa. Both took immediate measures to escape. But Quintus had to return to Rome to get money for their flight, and, as it would appear, to fetch his son. The emissaries of the Triumvirate were sent to search the house; the father had hid himself, but the son was seized, and refusing to give any information, was put to the torture. His father heard his cries of agony, came forth from his hiding-place, and asked only to be put to death first. The son in his turn made the same request, and the assassins were so far merciful that they killed both at once.

Cicero himself might yet have escaped, but for something of his old indecision. He had gone on board a small vessel with the intention of joining Brutus in Macedonia, when he suddenly changed his mind, and insisted on being put on shore again. He wandered about, half-resolving (for the third time) on suicide. He would go to Rome, stab himself on the altar-hearth in young Cæsar's house, and call down the vengeance of heaven upon the traitor. The accounts of these last hours of his life are, unfortunately, somewhat contradictory, and none of the authorities to be entirely depended on; Abeken has made a careful attempt to harmonize them, which it will be best here to follow.

Urged by the prayers of his slaves, the faithful adherents of a kind master, he once more embarked, and once more (Appian says, from sea-sickness, which he never could endure) landed near Caieta, where he had a seaside villa. Either there, or, as other accounts say, at his house at Formiæ, he laid himself down to pass the night, and wait for death. "Let me die," said he, "in my own country, which I have so often saved." But again the faithful slaves aroused him, forced him

into a litter, and hurried him down through the woods to the sea-shore—for the assassins were in hot pursuit of him. They found his house shut up; but some traitor showed them a short cut by which to overtake the fugitive. As he lay reading (it is said), even during these anxious moments, a play of his favorite Euripides, every line of whom he used to declare contained some maxim worth remembering, he heard their steps approaching, and ordered the litter to be set down. He looked out, and recognized at the head of the party an officer named Lænas, whom he had once successfully defended on a capital charge; but he saw no gratitude or mercy in the face, though there were others of the band who covered their eyes for pity, when they saw the disheveled gray hair and pale worn features of the great Roman (he was within a month of sixty-four). He turned from Lænas to the centurion, one Henrennius, and said, “Strike, old soldier, if you understand your trade!” At the third blow—by one or other of those officers, for both claimed the evil honor—his head was severed. They carried it straight to Antony, where he sat on the seat of justice in the Forum, and demanded the offered reward. The triumvir, in his joy, paid it some ten times over. He sent the bloody trophy to his wife; and the Roman Jezebel spat in the dead face, and ran her bodkin through the tongue which had spoken those bold and bitter truths against her false husband. The great orator fulfilled, almost in the very letter, the words which, treating of the liberty of the pleader, he had put into the mouth of Crassus—“You must cut out this tongue, if you would check my free speech: nay, even then, my very breathing should protest against your lust for power.” The head, by Antony’s order, was then nailed upon the

Rostra, to speak there, more eloquently than ever the living lips had spoken, of the dead liberty of Rome.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### CHARACTER AS A POLITICIAN AND AN ORATOR.

CICERO shared very largely in the feeling, which is common to all men, of ambition and energy—a desire to stand well not only with their own generation, but with posterity. It is a feeling natural to every man who knows that his name and acts must necessarily become historical. If it is more than usually patent in Cicero's case, it is only because in his letter to Atticus we have more than usual access to the inmost heart of the writer; for surely such a thoroughly confidential correspondence has never been published before or since. "What will history say of me six hundred years hence?" he asks, unbosoming himself in this sort to his friend. More than thrice the six hundred years have passed, and, in Cicero's case, history has hardly yet made up its mind. He has been lauded and abused, from his own times down to the present, in terms as extravagant as are to be found in the most passionate of his own orations; both his accusers and his champions have caught the trick of his rhetorical exaggeration more easily than his eloquence. Modern German critics like Drumann and Mommsen have attacked him with hardly less bitterness, though with more decency, than the historian Dio Cassius, who lived so near his own times. Bishop Middleton, on the other hand, in those pleasant and comprehensive volumes which are still to this day the great storehouse of materials for Cicero's



biography, is as blind to his faults as though he were himself delivering a panegyric in the Rostra at Rome. Perhaps it is the partiality of the learned bishop's view which has produced a reaction in the minds of sceptical German scholars, and of some modern writers of our own. It is impossible not to sympathize in some degree with that Athenian who was tired of always hearing Aristides extolled as "the Just;" and there was certainly a strong temptation to critics to pick holes in a man's character who was perpetually, during his lifetime and for eighteen centuries after his death, having a trumpet sounded before him to announce him as the prince of patriots as well as philosophers; worthy indeed, as Erasmus thought, to be canonized as a saint of the Catholic Church, but for the single drawback of his not having been a Christian.

On one point some of his eulogists seem manifestly unfair. They say that the circumstances under which we form our judgment of the man are exceptional in this—that we happen to possess in his case all this mass of private and confidential letters (there are nearly eight hundred of his own which have come down to us), giving us an insight into his private motives, his secret jealousies, and hopes, and fears, and ambitions, of which in the case of other men we have no such revelation. It is quite true; but his advocates forget that it is from the very same pages which reveal his weaknesses that they draw their real knowledge of many of those characteristics which they most admire—his sincere love for his country, his kindness of heart, his amiability in all his domestic relations. It is true that we cannot look into the private letters of Cæsar, or Pompey, or Brutus, as we can into Cicero's; but it is not so certain that if we could our estimate of their

characters would be lowered. We might discover, in their cases as in his, many traces of what seems insincerity, timidity, a desire to sail with the stream; we might find that the views which they expressed in public were not always those which they entertained in private; but we might also find an inner current of kindness, and benevolence, and tenderness of heart, for which the world gives them little credit. One enthusiastic advocate, Wieland, goes so far as to wish that this kind of evidence could, in the case of such a man as Cicero, have been "cooked," to use a modern phrase: that we could have had only a judicious selection from this too truthful mass of correspondence; that his secretary, Tiro, or some judicious friend, had destroyed the whole packet of letters in which the great Roman bemoaned himself, during his exile from Rome, to his wife, to his brother, and to Atticus. The partisan method of writing history, though often practised, has seldom been so boldly professed.

But it cannot be denied, that if we know too much of Cicero to judge him merely by his public life, as we are obliged to do with so many heroes of history, we also know far too little, of those stormy times in which he lived to pronounce too strongly upon his behaviour in such difficult circumstances. The true relations between the various parties at Rome, as we have tried to sketch them, are confessedly puzzling even to the careful student. And without a thorough understanding of these, it is impossible to decide, with any hope of fairness, upon Cicero's conduct as a patriot and a politician. His character was full of conflicting elements, like the times in which he lived, and was necessarily in a great degree molded by them. The egotism which shows itself so plainly alike in his public speeches and

In his private writings, more than once made him personal enemies, and brought him into trouble, though it was combined with great kindness of heart and consideration for others. He saw the right clearly, and desired to follow it, but his good intentions were too often frustrated by a want of firmness and decision. His desire to keep well with men of all parties, so long as it seemed possible (and this not so much from the desire of self-aggrandizement, as from a hope through their aid to serve the commonwealth) laid him open on more than one occasion to the charge of insincerity.

There is one comprehensive quality which may be said to have been wanting in his nature, which clouded his many excellences, led him continually into false positions, and even in his delightful letters excites in the reader, from time to time, an impatient feeling of contempt. He wanted manliness. It was a quality which was fast dying out, in his day, among even the best of the luxurious and corrupt aristocracy of Rome. It was perhaps but little missed in his character by those of his contemporaries who knew and loved him best. But without that quality, to an English mind, it is hard to recognize in any man, however brilliant and amiable, the true philosopher or hero.

The views which this great Roman politician held upon the vexed question of the ballot did not differ materially from those of his worthy grandfather before-mentioned.\* The ballot was popular at Rome,—for many reasons, some of them not the most creditable to the characters of the voters; and because it was popular, Cicero speaks of it occasionally, in his forensic speeches, with a cautious praise; but of his real esti-

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\* See p. 3.

mate of it there can be no kind of doubt. "I am of the same opinion now," he writes to his brother, "that ever I was; there is nothing like the open suffrage of the lips." So in one of his speeches, he uses even stronger language: "The ballot," he says, "enables men to open their faces, and to cover up their thoughts; it gives them licence to promise whatever they are asked, and at the same time to do whatever they please." Mr. Grote once quoted a phrase of Cicero's, applied to the voting-papers of his day, as a testimony in favor of this mode of secret suffrage—grand words, and wholly untranslatable into anything like corresponding English—" *Tabella vindex tacitæ libertatis*"—"the tablet which secures the liberty of silence." But knowing so well as Cicero did what was the ordinary character of Roman jurors and Roman voters, and how often this "liberty of silence" was a liberty to take a bribe and to vote the other way, one can almost fancy that we see upon his lips, as he utters the sounding phrase, that playful curve of irony which is said to have been their characteristic expression.\* Mr. Grote forgot, too, as was well pointed out by a writer in the "Quarterly Review,"† that in the very next sentence the orator is proud to boast that he himself was not so elected to office, but "by the living voices" of his fellow-citizens.

The character of his eloquence may be understood in some degree by the few extracts which have been given from his public speeches; always remembering how many of its charms are necessarily lost by losing

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\* No bust, coin, or gem is known which bears any genuine likeness of Cicero. There are several existing which purport to be such, but all are more or less apocryphal.

† Quarterly Review, lxi. 522.

the actual language in which his thoughts were clothed. We have lost perhaps nearly as much in another way, in that we can only read the great orator instead of listening to him. Yet it is possible, after all, that this loss to us is not so great as it might seem. Some of his best speeches, as we know—those, for instance, against Verres and in defence of Milo—were written in the closet, and never spoken at all; and most of the others were reshaped and published for publication. Nor is it certain that his declamation, which some of his Roman rivals found fault with as savoring too much of the florid Oriental type, would have been agreeable to our colder English taste. He looked upon gesture and action as essential elements of the orator's power, and had studied them carefully from the artists of the theatre. There can be no doubt that we have his own views on this point in the words which he has put into the mouth of his "Brutus," in the treatise on oratory which bears that name. He protests against the "Attic coldness" of style which, he says, would soon empty the benches of their occupants. He would have the action and bearing of the speaker to be such that even the distant spectator, too far off to hear, should "know that there was a Roscius on the stage." He would have found a French audience in this respect more sympathetic than an English one.\* His

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\* Our speakers certainly fall into the other extreme. The British orator's style of gesticulation may still be recognized, *mutatis mutandis*, in Addison's humorous sketch of a century ago: "You may see many a smart rhetorician turning his hat in his hands, molding it into several different cocks, examining sometimes the lining and sometimes the button, during the whole course of his harangue. A deaf man would think that he was cheapening a beaver, when he is talking perhaps of the fate of the British nation."

own highly nervous temperament would certainly tend to excited action. The speaker, who, as we are told, "shuddered visibly over his whole body when he first began to speak," was almost sure, as he warmed to his work, to throw himself into it with a passionate energy.

He has put on record his own ideas of the qualifications and the duties of the public speaker, whether in the Senate or at the bar, in three continuous treatises on the subject, entitled respectively, "*On Oratory*," "*Brutus*," and "*The Orator*," as well as in some other works of which we have only fragments remaining. With the first of these works, which he inscribed to his brother, he was himself exceedingly well satisfied, and it perhaps remains still the ablest, as it was the first, attempt to reduce eloquence to a science. The second is a critical sketch of the great orators of Rome: and in the third we have Cicero's view of what the perfect orator should be. His ideal is a high one, and a true one; that he should not be the mere rhetorician, any more than the mere technical lawyer or keen partisan, but the man of perfect education and perfect taste, who can speak on all subjects, out of the fulness of his mind, "with variety and copiousness."

Although, as has been already said, he appears to have attached but little value to a knowledge of the technicalities of law, in other respects his preparation for his work was of the most careful kind; if we may assume, as we probably may, that it is his own experience which, in his treatise on Oratory, he puts into the mouth of Marcus Antonius, one of his greatest predecessors at the Roman bar.

"It is my habit to have every client explain to me personally his own case; to allow no one else to be present, that so he may speak more freely. Then I



take the opponent's side, while I make him plead his own cause, and bring forward whatever arguments he can think of. Then, when he is gone, I take upon myself, with as much impartiality as I can, three different characters—my own, my opponent's, and that of the jury. Whatever point seems likely to help the case rather than injure it, this I decide must be brought forward; when I see that anything is likely to do more harm than good, I reject and throw it aside altogether. So I gain this,—that I think over first what I mean to say, and speak afterwards; while a good many pleaders, relying on their abilities, try to do both at once.”\*

He reads a useful lesson to young and zealous advocates in the same treatise—that sometimes it may be wise not to touch at all in reply upon a point which makes against your client, and to which you have no real answer; and that it is even more important to say nothing which may injure your case than to omit something which might possibly serve it. A maxim which some modern barristers (and some preachers also) might do well to bear in mind.

Yet he did not scorn to use what may almost be called the tricks of his art, if he thought they would help to secure him a verdict. The outward and visible appeal to the feelings seems to have been as effective in the Roman forum as with a British jury. Cicero would have his client stand by his side dressed in mourning, with hair disheveled, and in tears, when he meant to make a pathetic appeal to the compassion of the jurors; or a family group would be arranged, as circumstances allowed,—the wife and children, the

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\* *De Oratore* II., 24, 72.

mother and sisters, or the aged father, if presentable, would be introduced in open court to create a sensation at the right moment. He had tears apparently as ready at his command as an eloquent and well-known English Attorney-General. Nay, the tears seem to have been marked down, as it were, upon his brief. "My feelings prevent my saying more," he declares in his defense of Publius Sylla. "I weep while I make the appeal"—"I cannot go on for tears"—he repeats towards the close of that fine oration in behalf of Milo—the speech that never was spoken. Such phrases remind us of the story told of a French preacher, whose manuscripts were found to have marginal stage directions: "Here take out your handkerchief;"—"here cry—if possible." But such were held to be the legitimate adjuncts of Roman oratory, and it is quite possible to conceive that the advocate, like more than one modern tragedian who could be named, entered so thoroughly into the spirit of the part that the tears flowed quite naturally.

A far less legitimate weapon of oratory—offensive and not defensive—was the bitter and coarse personality in which he so frequently indulged. Its use was held perfectly lawful in the Roman forum, whether in political debate or in judicial pleadings, and it was sure to be highly relished by a mixed audience. There is no reason to suppose that Cicero had recourse to it in any unusual degree; but employ it he did, and most unscrupulously. It was not only private character that he attacked, as in the case of Antony and Clodius, but even personal defects or peculiarities were made the subject of bitter ridicule. He did not hesitate to season his harangue by a sarcasm on the cast in the prosecutor's eye, or the wen on the defendant's

neck, and to direct the attention of the court to these points, as though they were corroborative evidence of a moral deformity. The most conspicuous instance of this practice of his is in the invective which he launched in the Senate against Piso, who had made a speech reflecting upon him. Referring to Cicero's exile, he had made that sore subject doubly sore by declaring that it was not Cicero's unpopularity, so much as his unfortunate propensity to bad verse, which had been the cause of it. A jingling line of his to the effect that

"The gown wins grander triumphs than the sword." \*

had been thought to be pointed against the recent victories of Pompey, and to have provoked him to use his influence to get rid of the author. But this annotation of Cicero's poetry had not been Piso's only offence. He had been consul at the time of the exile, and had given vent, it may be remembered, to the witticism that the "saviour of Rome" might save the city a second time by his absence. Cicero was not the man to forget it. The beginning of his attack on Piso is lost, but there is quite enough remaining. Piso was of a swarthy complexion, approaching probably to the negro type. "Beast"—is the term by which Cicero addresses him. "Beast! there is no mistaking the evidence of that slave-like hue, those bristly cheeks, those discolored fangs. Your eyes, your brows, your face, your whole aspect, are the tacit index to your soul." †

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\* "*Cedant arma togæ, concedat laurea linguæ.*"

† Such flowers of eloquence are not encouraged at the modern bar. But they were common enough, even in the English law-courts, in former times. Mr. Attorney-General Coke's language to Raleigh at his trial—"Thou viper!" comes quite up to

It is not possible, within the compass of these pages, to give even the briefest account of more than a few of the many causes (they are twenty-four in number) in which the speeches made by Cicero, either for the prosecution or the defence, have been preserved to us. Some of them have more attraction for the English reader than others, either from the facts of the case being more interesting or more easily understood, or from their affording more opportunity for the display of the speaker's powers.

Mr. Fox had an intense admiration for the speech in defense of Cælius. The opinion of one who was no mean orator himself, on his great Roman predecessor, may be worth quoting:—

“Argumentative contention is not what he excels in; and he is never, I think, so happy as when he has an opportunity of exhibiting a mixture of philosophy and pleasantry, and especially when he can interpose anecdotes and references to the authority of the eminent characters in the history of his own country. No man appears, indeed, to have had such a real respect for authority as he; and therefore when he speaks on that subject he is always natural and earnest.”\*

There is anecdote and pleasantry enough in this particular oration; but the scandals of Roman society of that day, into which the defence of Cælius was obliged to enter, are not the most edifying subject for any read-

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Cicero's. Perhaps the Irish House of Parliament, while it existed, furnished the choicest modern specimens of this style of oratory. Mr. O'Flanagan, in his “Lives of the Lord Chancellors of Ireland,” tells us that a member for Galway, attacking an opponent when he knew that his sister was present during the debate, denounced the whole family—“from the toothless old hag that is now grinning in the gallery, to the white-livered scoundrel that is shivering on the floor.”

\* Letter to G. Wakefield—Correspondence, p. 35.

ers. Cælius was a young man of "equestrian" rank, who had been a kind of ward of Cicero's, and must have given him a good deal of trouble by his profligate habits, if the guardianship was anything more than nominal. But in this particular case the accusation brought against him—of trying to murder an ambassador from Egypt by means of hired assassins, and then to poison the lady who had lent him the money to bribe them with—was probably untrue. Clodia, the lady in question, was the worthy sister of the notorious Clodius, and bore as evil a reputation as it was possible for a woman to bear in the corrupt society of Rome—which is saying a great deal. She is the real mover in the case, though another enemy of Cælius, the son of a man whom he had himself brought to trial for bribery, was the ostensible prosecutor. Cicero, therefore, throughout the whole of his speech, aims the bitter shafts of his wit and eloquence at Clodia. His brilliant invectives against this lady, who was, as he pointedly said, "not only noble but notorious," are not desirable to quote. But the opening of the speech is in the advocate's best style. The trial, it seems, took place on a public holiday, when it was not usual to take any cause unless it were of pressing importance.

"If any spectator be here present, gentlemen, who knows nothing of our laws, our courts of justice, or our national customs, he will not fail to wonder what can be the atrocious nature of this case, that on a day of national festival and public holiday like this, when all other business in the Forum is suspended, this single trial should be going on; and he will entertain no doubt but that the accused is charged with a crime of such enormity, that if it were not at once taken cognizance of, the constitution itself would be in peril. And if he

heard there was a law which enjoined that in the case of seditions and disloyal citizens who should take up arms to attack the Senate-house, or use violence against the magistrates, or levy war against the commonwealth, inquisition into the matter should be made at once, on the very day;—he would not find fault with such a law: he would only ask the nature of the charge. But when he heard that it was no such atrocious crime, no treasonable attempt, no violent outrage, which formed the subject of this trial, but that a young man of brilliant abilities, hard-working in public life, and of popular character, was here accused by the son of a man whom he had himself once prosecuted, and was still prosecuting, and that all a bad woman's wealth and influence were being used against him,—he might take no exception to the filial zeal of Atratinus; but he would surely say that woman's infamous revenge should be baffled and punished. . . . I can excuse Atratinus; as to the other parties, they deserve neither excuse nor forbearance."

It was a strong story, the case for the prosecution, especially as regarded the alleged attempt to poison Clodia. The poison was given to a friend of Cælius, he was to give it to some slaves of Clodia whom he was to meet at certain baths frequented by her, and they were in some way to administer it. But the slaves betrayed the secret; and the lady employed certain gay and profligate young men, who were hangers-on of her own, to conceal themselves somewhere in the baths, and pounce upon Cælius's emissary with the poison in his possession. But this scheme was said to have failed. Clodia's detectives had rushed from their place of concealment too soon, and the bearer of the poison escaped. The counsel for the prisoner makes a great point of this.

"Why, 'tis the catastrophe of a stage-play—nay, of a



burlesque; when no more artistic solution of the plot can be invented, the hero escapes, the bell rings, and—the curtain falls! For I ask why, when Licinius was there trembling, hesitating, retreating, trying to escape—why that lady's body-guard let him go out of their hands? Were they afraid lest, so many against one, such stout champions against a single helpless man, frightened as he was and fierce as they were, they could not master him? I should like exceedingly to see them, those curled and scented youths, the bosom-friends of this rich and noble lady; those stout men-at-arms who were posted by their she-captain in this ambushade in the baths. And I should like to ask them how they hid themselves, and where? A bath?—why, it must either have been a Trojan horse, which bore within its womb this band of invincible heroes who went to war for a woman! I would make them answer this question,—why they, being so many and so brave, did not either seize this slight stripling, whom you see before you, where he stood, or overtake him when he fled? They will hardly be able to explain themselves, I fancy, if they get into that witness-box, however clever and witty they may be at the banquet,—nay, even eloquent occasionally, no doubt, over their wine. But the air of a court of justice is somewhat different from that of the banquet-hall; the benches of this court are not like the couches of a supper-table; the array of this jury presents a different spectacle from a company of revellers; nay, the broad glare of sunshine is harder to face than the glitter of the lamps. If they venture into it, I shall have to strip them of their pretty conceits and fools' gear. But, if they will be ruled by me, they will betake themselves to another trade, win favor in another quarter, flaunt themselves elsewhere than in this court.

Let them carry their brave looks to their lady there; let them lord it at her expense, cling to her, lie at her feet, be her slaves; only let them make no attempt upon the life and honor of an innocent man."

The satellites of Clodia could scarcely have felt comfortable under this withering fire of sarcasm. The speaker concluded with an apology—much required—for his client's faults, as those of a young man, and a promise on his behalf—on the faith of an advocate—that he would behave better for the future. He wound up the whole with a point of sensational rhetoric which was common, as has been said, to the Roman bar as to our own—an appeal to the jurymen as fathers. He pointed to the aged father of the defendant, leaning in the most approved attitude upon the shoulder of his son. Either this, or the want of evidence, or the eloquence of the pleader, had its due effect. Cælius was triumphantly acquitted; and it is a proof that the young man was not wholly graceless, that he rose afterwards to high public office, and never forgot his obligations to his eloquent counsel, to whom he continued a stanch friend. He must have had good abilities, for he was honored with frequent letters from Cicero when the latter was governor of Cilicia. He kept up some of his extravagant tastes; for when he was *Ædile* (which involved the taking upon him the expense of certain gladiatorial and wild-beast exhibitions), he wrote to beg his friend to send him out of his province some panthers for his show. Cicero complied with the request, and took the opportunity, so characteristic of him, of lauding his own administration of Cilicia, and making a kind of pun at the same time. "I have given orders to the hunters to see about the panthers; but panthers are very scarce, and the few there are

complain, people say, that in the whole province there are no traps laid for anybody but for them." Catching and skinning the unfortunate provincials, which had been a favorite sport with governors like Verres, had been quite done away with in Cilicia, we are to understand, under Cicero's rule.

His defence of Ligarius, who was impeached of treason against the state in the person of Cæsar, as having borne arms against him in his African campaign, has also been deservedly admired. There was some courage in Cicero's undertaking his defence; as a known partisan of Pompey, he was treading on dangerous and delicate ground. Cæsar was dictator at the time; and the case seems to have been tried before him as the sole judicial authority, without pretence of the intervention of anything like a jury. The defence—if defence it may be called—is a remarkable instance of the common appeal, not to the merits of the case, but to the feelings of the court. After making out what case he could for his client, the advocate as it were throws up his brief, and rests upon the clemency of the judge. Cæsar himself, it must be remembered, had begun public life, like Cicero, as a pleader: and, in the opinion of some competent judges, such as Tacitus and Quintilian, had bid fair to be a close rival.

"I have pleaded many causes, Cæsar—some, indeed, in association with yourself, while your public career spared you to the courts; but surely I never yet used language of this sort,—‘Pardon him, sirs, he has offended: he has made a false step: he did not think to do it; he never will again.’ This is language we use to a father. To the court it must be,—‘He did not do it: he never contemplated it: the evidence is false; the charge is fabricated.’ If you tell me you sit but as the

judge of the fact in this case, Cæsar,—if you ask me where and when he served against you,—I am silent; I will not now dwell on the extenuating circumstances, which even before a judicial tribunal might have their weight. We take this course before a judge, but I am here pleading to a father. ‘I have erred—I have done wrong, I am sorry: I take refuge in your clemency; I ask forgiveness for my fault; I pray you, pardon me.’ . . . There is nothing so popular, believe me, sir, as kindness; of all your many virtues none wins men’s admiration and their love like mercy. In nothing do men reach so near the gods, as when they can give life and safely to mankind. Fortune has given you nothing more glorious than the power, your own nature can supply nothing more noble than the will, to spare and pardon wherever you can. The case perhaps demands a longer advocacy—your gracious disposition feels it too long already. So I make an end, preferring for my cause that you should argue with your own heart, than that I or any other should argue with you. I will urge nothing more than this,—the grace which you shall extend to my client in his absence, will be felt as a boon by all here present.”

The great conqueror was, it is said, visibly affected by the appeal, and Ligarius was pardoned.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### MINOR CHARACTERISTICS.

Not content with his triumphs in prose, Cicero had always an ambition to be a poet. Of his attempts in this way we have only some imperfect fragments, scattered here and there through his other works,

too scanty to form any judgment upon. His poetical ability is apt to be unfairly measured by two lines which his opponents were very fond of quoting and laughing at, and which for that reason have become the best known. But it is obvious that if Wordsworth or Tennyson were to be judged solely by a line or two picked out by an unfavorable reviewer—say from “Peter Bell” or from the early version of the “Miller’s Daughter”—posterity would have a very mistaken appreciation of their merits. Plutarch and the younger Pliny, who had seen more of Cicero’s poetry than we have, thought highly of it. So he did himself; but so it was his nature to think of most of his own performances; and such an estimate is common to other authors besides Cicero, though few announce it so openly. Montaigne takes him to task for this, with more wit, perhaps, than fairness. “It is no great fault to write poor verses; but it is a fault not to be able to see how unworthy such poor verses were of his reputation.” Voltaire, on the other hand, who was perhaps as good a judge, thought there was “nothing more beautiful” than some of the fragments of his poem on “Marius,” who was the ideal hero of his youth. Perhaps the very fact, however, of none of his poems having been preserved, is some argument that such poetic gift as he had was rather facility than genius. He wrote, besides this poem on “Marius,” a “History of my Consulship,” and a “History of my Own Times,” in verse, and some translations from Homer.

He had no notion of what other men called relaxation: he found his own relaxation in a change of work. He excuses himself in one of his orations for this strange taste, as it would seem to the indolent and luxurious Roman nobles with whom he was so unequally yoked.

“Who after all shall blame me, or who has any right to be angry with me, if the time which is not grudged to others for managing their private business, for attending public games and festivals, for pleasures of any other kind—nay, even for very rest of mind and body—the time which others give to convivial meetings, to the gaming-table, to the tennis-court—this much I take for myself, for the resumption of my favorite studies?”

In this defatigable appetite for work of all kinds, he reminds us of no modern politician so much as of Sir George Cornwall Lewis; yet he would not have altogether agreed with him in thinking that life would be very tolerable if it were not for its amusements. He was, as we have seen, of a naturally social disposition. “I like a dinner-party,” he says in a letter to one of his friends “where I can say just what comes uppermost, and turn my sighs and sorrows into a hearty laugh. I doubt whether you are much better yourself when you can laugh as you did even at a philosopher. When the man asked—‘Whether anybody wanted to know anything?’ you said you had been wanting to know all day when it would be dinner-time. The fellow expected you to say you wanted to know how many worlds there were, or something of that kind.”\*

He is said to have been a great laugher. Indeed, he confesses honestly that the sense of humor was very powerful with him—“I am wonderfully taken by anything comic,” he writes to one of his friends. He reckons humor also as a useful ally to the orator. “A happy jest or facetious turn is not only pleasant, but also

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\* These professional philosophers, at literary dinner parties, offered to discuss and answer any question propounded by the company.



highly useful occasionally;" but he adds that this is an accomplishment which must come naturally, and cannot be taught under any possible system.\* There is at least sufficient evidence that he was much given to making jokes, and some of them which have come down to us would imply that a Roman audience was not very critical on this point. There is an air of gravity about all courts of justice which probably makes a very faint amount of jocularities hailed as a relief. Even in an English law court, a joke from the bar, much more from the bench, does not need to be of any remarkable brilliancy in order to be secure of raising a laugh: and we may fairly suppose that the same was the case at Rome. Cicero's jokes were frequently nothing more than puns, which it would be impossible, even if it were worth while, to reproduce to an English ear. Perhaps the best, or at all events the most intelligible, is his retort to Hortensius during the trial of Verres. The latter was said to have fed his counsel out of his Sicilian spoils—especially there was a figure of a sphinx of some artistic value, which had found its way from the house of the ex-governor into that of Hortensius. Cicero was putting a witness through a cross-examination of which his opponent could not see the bearing. "I do not understand all this," said Hortensius; "I am no hand at solving riddles." "That is strange, too," rejoined Cicero, "when you have a sphinx at home." In the same trial he condescended, in the midst of that burning eloquence of which we have spoken, to make two puns on the defendant's name. The word "*Verres*" had two meanings in the old Latin tongue: it signified a "boar-pig," and also a "broom" or "sweeping-

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\* De Orat. II. 54.

brush." One of Verres's friends, who either was, or had the reputation of being, a Jew, had tried to get the management of the prosecution out of Cicero's hands. "What has a Jew to do with *pork*?" asked the orator. Speaking, in the course of the same trial, of the way in which the governor had made "requisitions" of all the most valuable works of art throughout the island, "the broom," said he, "swept clean." He did not disdain the comic element in poetry, more than in prose; for we find in Quintilian\* a quotation from a punning epigram in some collection of such trifles which in his time bore Cicero's name. Tiro is said to have collected and published three volumes of his master's good things after his death; but if they were not better than those which have come down to us, as contained in his other writings, there has been no great loss to literature in Tiro's "Ciceroniana." He knew one secret at least of a successful humorist in society; for it is to him that we owe the first authoritative enunciation of a rule which is universally admitted—"that a jest never has so good an effect as when it is uttered with a serious countenance."

Cicero had a wonderful admiration for the Greeks. "I am not ashamed to confess," he writes to his brother, "especially since my life and career have been such that no suspicion of indolence or want of energy can rest upon me, that all my own attainments are due to those studies and those accomplishments which have been handed down to us in the literary treasures and the philosophical systems of the Greeks." It was no mere rhetorical outburst, when in his defence of Valerius Flaccus, accused like Verres, whether truly or falsely,

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\* "Libellus Jocularis," Quint. viii. 6.

of corrupt administration in his province, he thus introduced the deputation from Athens and Lacedæmon who appeared as witnesses to the character of his client.

“Athenians are here to-day among whom civilization, learning, religion, agriculture, public law and justice, had their birth, and whence they have been disseminated over all the world; for the possession of whose city, on account of its exceeding beauty, even gods are said to have contended: which is of such antiquity, that she is said to have bred her citizens within herself, and the same soil is termed at once their mother, their nurse, and their country; whose importance and influence is such that the name of Greece, though it has lost much of its weight and power, still holds its place by virtue of the renown of this single city.”

He had forgotten, perhaps, as an orator is allowed to forget, that in the very same speech, when his object was to discredit the accusers of his client, he had said, what was very commonly said of the Greeks at Rome, that they were a nation of liars. There were excellent men among them, he allowed—thinking at the moment of the counter-evidence which he had ready for the defendant—but he goes on to make this sweeping declaration:—

“I will say this of the whole race of the Greeks: I grant them literary genius, I grant them skill in various accomplishments, I do not deny them elegance in conversation, acuteness of intellect, fluent oratory; to any other high qualities they may claim I make no objection; but the sacred obligation that lies upon a witness to speak the truth is what that nation has never regarded.” \*

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\* Defense of Val. Flaccus, c. 4.

There was a certain proverb, he went on to say, "Lend me your evidence," implying—"and you shall have mine when you want it;" a Greek proverb, of course, and men knew these three words of Greek who knew no Greek besides. What he loved in the Greeks, then, was rather the grandeur of their literature and the charm of their social qualities (a strict regard for truth is, unhappily, no indispensable ingredient in this last); he had no respect whatever for their national character. The orator was influenced, perhaps, most of all by his intense reverence for the Athenian Demosthenes, whom, as a master in his art, he imitated and well nigh worshiped. The appreciation of his own powers which every able man has, and of which Cicero had at least his share, fades into humility when he comes to speak of his great model. "Absolutely perfect," he calls him in one place; and again in another, "What I have attempted, Demosthenes has achieved." Yet he felt also at times, when the fervor of genius was strong within him, that there was an ideal of eloquence enshrined in his own inmost mind, "which I can *feel*," he says, "but which I never knew to exist in any man."

He could not only write Greek as a scholar, but seems to have spoken it with considerable ease and fluency; for on one occasion he made a speech in that language, a condescension which some of his friends thought derogatory to the dignity of a Roman.

From the Greeks he learnt to appreciate art. How far his taste was really cultivated in this respect is difficult for us to judge. Some passages in his letters to Atticus might lead us to suspect that, as Disraeli concludes, he was rather a collector than a real lover of art. His appeals to his friend to buy up for him everything

and anything, and his surrender of himself entirely to Atticus's judgment in such purchases, do not bespeak a highly critical taste. In a letter to another friend, he seems to say that he only bought statuary as "furniture" for the gymnasium at his country seat; and he complains that four figures of Bacchanals, which this friend had just bought for him, had cost more than he would care to give for all the statues that ever were made. On the other hand, when he comes to deal with Verres's wholesale plunder of paintings and statues in Sicily he talks about the several works with considerable enthusiasm. Either he really understood his subject, or, like an able advocate, he had thoroughly got up his brief. But the art-notices which are scattered through his works show a considerable acquaintance with the artist-world of his day. He tells us, in his own admirable style, the story of Zeuxis, and the selection which he made from all the beauties of Crotona, in order to combine their several points of perfection in his portrait of Helen; he refers more than once, and always in language which implies an appreciation of the artist, to the works of Phidias, especially that which is said to have cost him his life—the shield of Minerva; and he discusses, though it is but by way of illustration, the comparative points of merit in the statues of Calamis, and Myron, and Polycletus, and in the paintings of the earlier schools of Zeuxis, Polygnotus, and Timanthes, with their four primitive colors, as compared with the more finished schools of Protogenes and Apelles. -

## CHAPTER IX.

## CICERO'S CORRESPONDENCE.

## I. ATTICUS.

It seems wonderful how, in the midst of all his work, Cicero found time to keep up such a voluminous correspondence. Something like eight hundred of his letters still remain to us, and there were whole volumes of them long preserved which are now lost,\* to say nothing of the very many which may never have been thought worth preserving. The secret lay in his wonderful energy and activity. We find him writing letters before day-break, during the service of his meals, on his journeys, and dictating them to an amanuensis as he walked up and down to take needful exercise.

His correspondents were of almost all varieties of position and character, from Cæsar and Pompey, the great men of the day, down to his domestic servant and secretary, Tiro. Among them were rich and ease-loving Epicureans like Atticus and Pætus, and even men of pleasure like Cælius: grave Stoics like Cato, eager patriots like Brutus and Cassius, authors such as Cornelius Nepos and Lucceius the historians, Varro the grammarian, and Metius the poet; men who dabbled with literature in a gentleman-like way, like Hirtius and Appius, and the accomplished literary critic and patron of the day—himself of no mean reputation as poet, orator, and historian—Caius Asinius Pollio. Cicero's versatile powers found no difficulty in suiting the con-

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\* Collections of his letters to Cæsar, Brutus, Cornelius Nepos, the historian, Hirtius, Pansa, and to his son, are known to have existed.



tents of his own letters to the various tastes and interests of his friends. Sometimes he sends to his correspondent what was in fact a political journal of the day—rather one-sided, it must be confessed, as all political journals are, but furnishing us with items of intelligence which throw light, as nothing else can, on the history of those latter days of the Republic. Sometimes he jots down the mere gossip of his last dinner party; sometimes he notices the speculations of the last new theorist in philosophy, or discusses with a literary friend some philological question—the latter being a study in which he was very fond of dabbling, though with little success, for the science of language was as yet unknown.

His chief correspondent, as has been said, was his old schoolfellow and constant friend through life, Pomponius Atticus. The letters addressed to him which still remain to us cover a period of twenty-four years, with a few occasional interruptions, and the correspondence only ceased with Cicero's death. The Athenianized Roman, though he had deliberately withdrawn himself from the distracting factions of his native city, which he seldom revisited, kept on the best terms with the leaders of all parties, and seems to have taken a very lively interest, though merely in the character of a looker-on, in the political events which crowded so fast upon each other during the fifty years of his voluntary expatriation. Cicero's letters were to him what an English newspaper would be now to an English gentleman who for his own reasons preferred to reside in Paris, without forswearing his national interests and sympathies. At times, when Cicero was more at leisure, and when messengers were handy (for we have to remember that there was nothing like our modern post), Cicero would despatch one of these letters to Atticus daily.

We have nearly four hundred of them in all. They are continually garnished, even to the point of affectation, with Greek quotations and phrases, partly perhaps in compliment to his friend's Athenian tastes, and partly from the writer's own passion for the language.

So much reference has been made to them throughout the previous biographical sketch,—for they supply us with some of the most important materials for Cicero's life and times,—that it may be sufficient to give in this place two or three of the shorter as specimens of the collection. One which describes a visit which he received from Julius Cæsar, already Dictator, in his country-house near Puteoli, is interesting, as affording a glimpse behind the scenes in those momentous days when no one knew exactly whether the great captain was to turn out a patriot or a conspirator against the liberties of Rome.

“ To think that I should have had such a tremendous visitor! But never mind; for all went off very pleasantly. But when he arrived at Philippus's house\* on the evening of the second day of the Saturnalia, the place was so full of soldiers that they could hardly find a spare table for Cæsar himself to dine at. There were two thousand men. Really I was in a state of perplexity as to what was to be done next day: but Barba Cassius came to my aid,—he supplied me with a guard. They pitched their tents in the grounds, and the house was protected. He stayed with Philippus until one o'clock on the third day of the Saturnalia, and would see no one. Going over accounts, I suppose, with Balbus. Then he walked on the sea-shore. After two he had a bath: then he listened to some verses on Mamurra, without moving a muscle

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\* This was close to Cicero's villa, on the coast.

of his countenance: then dressed,\* and sat down to dinner. He had taken a precautionary emetic, and therefore ate and drank heartily and unrestrainedly. We had, I assure you, a very good dinner, and well served; and not only that, but

‘The feast of reason and the flow of soul’†

besides. His suite were abundantly supplied at three other tables: the freedmen of the lower rank, and even the slaves, were well taken care of. The higher class had really an elegant entertainment. Well, no need to make a long story; we found we were both ‘flesh and blood.’ Still he is not the kind of guest to whom you would say—‘Now do, pray, take us in your way on your return.’ Once is enough. We had no conversation on business, but a good deal of literary talk. In short, he seemed to be much pleased, and to enjoy himself. He said he should stay one day at Puteoli, and another at Baïæ. So here you have an account of this visit, or rather quartering of troops upon me, which I disliked the thoughts of, but which really, as I have said, gave me no annoyance. I shall stay here a little longer, then go to my house at Tusculum. When Cæsar passed Dolabella’s villa, all the troops formed up on the right and left of his horse, which they did nowhere else.‡ I heard that from Nicias.”

In the following, he is anticipating a visit from his friend, and from the lady to whom he is betrothed.

\* Literally, “he got himself oiled.” The emetic was a disgusting practice of Roman *bon vivants* who were afraid of indigestion.

† The verse which Cicero quotes from Lucilius is fairly equivalent to this.

‡ Probably by the way of salute; or possibly as a precaution.

“I had a delightful visit from Cincius on the 30th of January, before daylight. For he told me that you were in Italy, and that he was going to send off some messengers to you, and would not let them go without a letter from me. Not that I have much to write about (especially when you are all but here), except to assure you that I am anticipating your arrival with the greatest delight. Therefore fly to me, to show your own affection, and to see what affection I bear you. Other matters when we meet. I have written this in a hurry. As soon as ever you arrive, bring all your people to my house. You will gratify me very much by coming. You will see how wonderfully well Tyrannio has arranged my books, the remains of which are much better than I had thought. And I should be very glad if you could send me a couple of your library clerks, whom Tyrannio could make use of as binders, and to help him in other ways; and tell them to bring some parchment to make indices—syllabuses, I believe you Greeks call them. But this only if quite convenient to you. But, at any rate, be sure you come yourself if you can make any stay in our parts, and bring Pilia with you, for that is but fair, and Tullia wishes it much. Upon my word, you have bought a very fine place. I hear that your gladiators fight capitally. If you had cared to hire them out, you might have cleared your expenses at these two last public shows. But we can talk about this hereafter. Be sure to come; and do your best about the clerks, if you love me.”

The Roman gentleman of elegant and accomplished tastes, keeping a troop of private gladiators, and thinking of hiring them out, to our notions, is a curious combination of character; but the taste was not essentially more brutal than the prize-ring and the cock-fights of the last century.

## II. PÆTUS.

Another of Cicero's favorite correspondents was Papius Pætus, who seems to have lived at home at ease, and taken little part in the political tumults of his day. Like Atticus, he was an Epicurean, and thought more of the pleasures of life than of its cares and duties. Yet Cicero evidently took great pleasure in his society, and his letters to him are written in the same familiar and genial tone as those to his old school-fellow. Some of them throw a pleasant light upon the social habits of the day. Cicero had had some friends staying with him at his country seat at Tusculum, to whom, he says, he had been giving lessons in oratory. Dolabella, his son-in-law, and Hirtius, the future consul, were among them. "They are my scholars in declamation, and I am theirs in dinner-eating; for I conclude you have heard (you seem to hear everything) that they come to me to declaim, and I go to them for dinners. 'Tis all very well for you to swear that you cannot entertain me in such grand fashion as I am used to, but it is of use. . . . Better be victimized by your friend than by your debtors, as you have been. After all, I don't require such a banquet as leaves a great waste behind it; a little will do, only handsomely served and well cooked. I remember your telling me about a dinner of Phamea's—well, it need not be such a late affair as that, nor so grand in other respects; nay, if you persist in giving me one of your mother's old family dinners, I can stand even that. My new reputation for good living has reached you, I find, before my arrival, and you are alarmed at it; but, pray, put no trust in your antecourses—I have given up that altogether. I used to

spoil my appetite, I remember, upon your oil and sliced sausages. . . . One expense I really shall put you to; I must have my warm bath. My other habits, I assure you, are quite unaltered; all the rest is joke."

Pætus seems to answer him with the same good-humored badinage. Balbus, the governor of Africa, had been to see him, he says, and *he* had been content with such humble fare as he feared Cicero might despise. So much, at least, we may gather from Cicero's answer.

"Satirical as ever, I see. You say Balbus was content with very modest fare. You seem to insinuate that when grandees are so moderate, much more ought a poor ex-consul like myself so to be. You don't know that I fished it all out of your visitor himself, for he came straight to my house on his landing. The very first words I said to him were, 'How did you get on with our friend Pætus?' He swore he had never been better entertained. If this referred to the charms of your conversation, remember, I shall be quite as appreciative a listener as Balbus; but if it meant the good things on the table, I must beg you will not treat us men of eloquence worse than you do a 'Lisper.' " \*

They carry on this banter through several letters. Cicero regrets that he has been unable as yet to pay his threatened visit, when his friend would have seen what advances he had made in gastronomic science. He was able now to eat through the whole bill of fare—"from the eggs to the *roti*."

"I [Stoic that used to be] have gone over with my whole forces into the camp of Epicurus. You will have to do with a man who can eat, and who knows what's

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\* One of Cicero's puns. Balbus means "Lisper."



what. You know how conceited we late learners are, as the proverb says. You will have to unlearn those little 'plain dinners' and makeshifts of yours. We have made such advances in the art, that we have been venturing to invite, more than once, your friends Verrius and Camillus (what elegant and fastidious gentlemen they are!). But see how audacious we are getting! I have even given Hirtius a dinner—but without a peacock. My cook could imitate nothing in his entertainments except the hot soup."

Then he hears that his friend is in bed with the gout.

"I am extremely sorry to hear it, as in duty bound; still, I am quite determined to come, that I may see you, and pay my visit—yes, and have my dinner; for I suppose your cook has not got the gout as well."

Such were the playful epistles of a busy man. But even in some of these lightest effusions we see the cares of the statesman showing through. Here is a portion of a later letter to the same friend.

"I am very much concerned to hear you have given up going out to dinner; for it is depriving yourself of a great source of enjoyment and gratification. Then, again, I am afraid—for it is as well to speak honestly—lest you should unlearn certain old habits of yours, and forget to give your own little dinners. For if formerly, when you had good examples to imitate, you were still not much of a proficient in that way, how can I suppose you will get on now? Spurina, indeed, when I mentioned the thing to him, and explained your previous habits, proved to demonstration that there would be danger to the highest interests of the state if you did not return to your old ways in the spring. But indeed, my good Pætus, I advise you, joking apart, to

associate with good fellows, and pleasant fellows, and men who are fond of you. There is nothing better worth having in life, nothing that makes life more happy. . . . See how I employ philosophy to reconcile you to dinner-parties. Take care of your health; and that you will best do by going out to dinner. . . . But don't imagine, as you love me, that because I write jestingly I have thrown off all anxiety about public affairs. Be assured, my dear Pætus, that I seek nothing and care for nothing, night or day, but how my country may be kept safe and free. I omit no opportunity of advising, planning, or acting. I feel in my heart that if, in securing this, I have to lay down my life, I shall have ended it well and honorably."

### III. HIS BROTHER QUINTUS.

Between Marcus Cicero and his younger brother Quintus there existed a very sincere and cordial affection—somewhat warmer, perhaps, on the side of the elder, inasmuch as his wealth and position enabled him rather to confer than to receive kindnesses; the rule in such cases being (so cynical philosophers tell us) that the affection is lessened rather than increased by the feeling of obligation. He almost adopted the younger Quintus, his nephew, and had him educated with his own son; and the two cousins received their earlier training together in one or other of Marcus Cicero's country houses under a clever Greek freedman of his, who was an excellent scholar, and—what was less usual amongst his countrymen, unless Cicero's estimate of them does them great injustice—a very honest man, but, as the two boys complained, terribly passionate. Cicero himself, however, was the head tutor—an office for which, as he

modestly writes, his Greek studies fully qualified him. Quintus Cicero behaved ill to his brother after the battle of Pharsalia, making what seemed to have been very unjust accusations against him in order to pay court to Cæsar; but they soon became friends again.

Twenty-nine of the elder Cicero's letters to his brother remain, written in terms of remarkable kindness and affection, which go far to vindicate the Roman character from a charge which has sometimes been brought against it of coldness in these family relationships. Few modern brothers, probably, would write to each other in such terms as these:—

“Afraid lest your letters bother me? I wish you would bother me, and re-bother me, and talk to me and at me; for what can give me more pleasure? I swear that no muse-stricken rhymester ever reads his own last poem with more delight than I do what you write to me about matters public or private, town or country. Here now is a letter from you full of pleasant matter, but with this dash of the disagreeable in it, that you have been afraid—nay, are even now afraid—of being troublesome to me. I could quarrel with you about it, if that were not a sin. But if I have reason to suspect anything of that sort again, I can only say that I shall always be afraid lest, when we are together, I may be troublesome to you.”

Or take, again, the pathetic apology which he makes for having avoided an interview with Quintus in those first days of his exile when he was so thoroughly unmanned:—

“My brother, my brother, my brother! Did you really fear that I was angry, because I sent off the slaves without any letter to you? And did you even think that I was unwilling to see you? I angry with you?

Could I possibly be angry with you? . . . When I miss you, it is not a brother only that I miss. To me you have always been the pleasantest of companions, a son in dutiful affection, a father in counsel. What pleasure ever had I without you, or you without me?"

Quintus had accompanied Cæsar on his expedition into Britain as one of his lieutenants, and seems to have written home to his brother some notices of the country; to which the latter, towards the end of his reply, makes this allusion:—

"How delighted I was to get your letter from Britain! I had been afraid of the voyage across, afraid of the rock-bound coast of the island. The other dangers of such a campaign I do not mean to despise, but in these there is more to hope than to fear, and I have been rather anxiously expecting the result than in any real alarm about it. I see you have a capital subject to write about. What novel scenery, what natural curiosities, and remarkable places, what strange tribes and strange customs, what a campaign, and what a commander you have to describe! I will willingly help you in the points you request; and I will send you the verses you ask for—though it is sending 'an owl to Athens,'\* I know."

In another letter he says, "Only give me Britain to paint with your colors and my own pencil." But either the Britons of those days did not, after all, seem to afford sufficient interest for poem or history, or for some other reason this joint literary undertaking, which seems once to have been contemplated, was never carried out, and we have missed what would beyond doubt have been a highly interesting volume of sketches in Britain by the brothers Cicero.

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\* A Greek proverb, equivalent to our "coals to Newcastle."

Quintus was a poet as well as his brother—nay, a better poet, in the latter's estimation, or at least he was polite enough to say so more than once. In quantity, at least, if not in quality, the younger must have been a formidable rival, for he wrote, as appears from one of these letters, four tragedies in fifteen days—possibly translations only from the Greek.

One of the most remarkable of all Cicero's letters, and perhaps that which does him most credit both as a man and a statesman, is one which he wrote to his brother, who was at the time governor of Asia. Indeed, it is much more than a letter; it is rather a grave and carefully weighed paper of instructions on the duties of such a position. It is full of sound practical sense, and lofty principles of statesmanship—very different from the principles which too commonly ruled the conduct of Roman governors abroad. The province which had fallen to the lot of Quintus Cicero was one of the richest belonging to the Empire, and which presented the greatest temptations and the greatest facilities for the abuse of power to selfish purposes. Though called Asia, it consisted only of the late kingdom of Pergamus, and had come under the dominion of Rome, not by conquest, as was the case with most of the provinces, but by way of legacy from Attalus, the last of its kings; who, after murdering most of his own relations, had named the Roman people as his heirs. The seat of government was at Ephesus. The population was of a very mixed character, consisting partly of true Asiatics, and partly of Asiatic Greeks, the descendants of the old colonists, and containing also a large Roman element—merchants who were there for purposes of trade, many of them bankers and money-lenders, and speculators who farmed the imperial taxes,

and were by no means scrupulous in the matter of fleecing the provincials. These latter—the “Publicani,” as they were termed—might prove very dangerous enemies to any too zealous reformer. If the Roman governor there really wished to do his duty, what with the combined servility and double-dealing of the Orientals, the proverbial lying of the Greeks, and the grasping injustice of the Roman officials, he had a very difficult part to play. How Quintus had been playing it is not quite clear. His brother, in this admirable letter, assumes that he had done all that was right, and urges him to maintain the same course. But the advice would hardly have been needed if all had gone well hitherto.

“You will find little trouble in holding your subordinates in check, if you can but keep a check upon yourself. So long as you resist gain, and pleasure, and all other temptations, as I am sure you do, I cannot fancy there will be any danger of your not being able to check a dishonest merchant or an extortionate collector. For even the Greeks, when they see you living thus, will look upon you as some hero from their old annals, or some supernatural being from heaven, come down into their province.

“I write thus, not to urge you so to act, but that you may congratulate yourself upon having so acted, now and heretofore. For it is a glorious thing for a man to have held a government for three years in Asia, in such sort that neither statue, nor painting, nor work of art of any kind, nor any temptations of wealth or beauty (in all which temptations your province abounds) could draw you from the strictest integrity and self-control: that your official progresses should have been no cause of dread to the inhabitants, that none should be impoverished by your requisitions, none terrified at the



news of your approach;—but that you should have brought with you, wherever you came, the most hearty rejoicings, public and private, inasmuch as every town saw in you a protector and not a tyrant—every family received you as a guest, not as a plunderer.

“But in these points, as experience has by this time taught you, it is not enough for you to have these virtues yourself, but you must look to it carefully, that in this guardianship of the province not you alone, but every officer under you, discharges his duty to our subjects, to our fellow-citizens, and to the state. . . . If any of your subordinates seem grasping for his own interest, you may venture to bear with him so long as he merely neglects the rules by which he ought to be personally bound; never so far as to allow him to abuse for his own gain the power with which you have intrusted him to maintain the dignity of his office. For I do not think it well, especially since the customs of official life incline so much of late to laxity and corrupt influence, that you should scrutinize too closely every abuse, or criticise too strictly every one of your officers, but rather place trust in each in proportion as you feel confidence in his integrity.

“For those whom the state has assigned you as companions and assistants in public business, you are answerable only within the limits I have just laid down; but for those whom you have chosen to associate with yourself as members of your private establishment and personal suite, you will be held responsible not only for all they do, but for all they say. . . .

“Your ears should be supposed to hear only what you publicly listen to, not to be open to every secret and false whisper for the sake of private gain. Your official seal should be not as a mere common tool, but as though

it were yourself; not the instrument of other men's wills, but the evidence of your own. Your officers should be the agents of your clemency, not of their own caprice; and the rods and axes which they bear should be the emblems of your dignity, not merely of your power. In short, the whole province should feel that the persons, the families, the reputation, and the fortunes of all over whom you rule, are held by you very precious. Let it be well understood that you will hold that man as much your enemy who gives a bribe, if it comes to your knowledge, as the man who receives it. But no one will offer bribes, if this be once made clear, that those who pretend to have influence of this kind with you have no power, after all, to gain any favor for others at your hands.

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“Let such, then, be the foundations of your dignity;—first, integrity and self-control on your own part; a becoming behavior on the part of all about you; a very careful and circumspect selection of your intimates, whether Greeks or provincials; a grave and firm discipline maintained throughout your household. For if such conduct befits us in our private and everyday relations, it becomes wellnigh godlike in a government of such extent, in a state of morals so depraved, and in a province which presents so many temptations. Such a line of conduct and such rules will alone enable you to uphold that severity in your decisions and decrees which you have employed in some cases, and by which we have incurred (and I cannot regret it) the jealousy of certain interested parties. . . . You may safely use the utmost strictness in the administration of justice, so long as it is not capricious or partial, but maintained at the same level for all. Yet it will be of

little use that your own decisions be just and carefully weighed, unless the same course be pursued by all to whom you delegate any portion of your judicial authority. Such firmness and dignity must be employed as may not only be above partiality, but above the suspicion of it. To this must be added readiness to give audience, calmness in deciding, care in weighing the merits of the case and in satisfying the claims of the parties."

Yet he advises that justice should be tempered with leniency.

"If such moderation be popular at Rome, where there is so much self-assertion, such unbridled freedom, so much license allowed to all men;—where there are so many courts of appeal open, so many means of help, where the people have so much power and the Senate so much authority; how grateful beyond measure will moderation be in the governor of Asia, a province where all that vast number of our fellow-citizens and subjects, all those numerous states and cities, hang upon one man's nod! where there is no appeal to the tribune, no remedy at law, no Senate, no popular assembly! Wherefore it should be the aim of a great man, and one noble by nature and trained by education and liberal studies, so to behave himself in the exercise of that absolute power, as that they over whom he presides should never have cause to wish for any authority other than his."

#### IV. TIRO.

Of all Cicero's correspondence, his letters to Tiro supply the most convincing evidence of his natural kindness of heart. Tiro was a slave; but this must be taken with some explanation. The slaves in a house-

hold like Cicero's would vary in position from the lowest menial to the important major-domo and the confidential secretary. Tiro was of this higher class. He had probably been born and brought up in the service, like Eliezer in the household of Abraham, and had become, like him, the trusted agent of his master and the friend of the whole family. He was evidently a person of considerable ability and accomplishments, acting as literary amanuensis, and indeed, in some sort as a domestic critic, to his busy master. He had accompanied him to his government in Cilicia, and on the return home had been taken ill, and obliged to be left behind at Patræ. And this is Cicero's affectionate letter to him, written from Leucas (Santa Maura) the day afterwards:—

“I thought I could have borne the separation from you better, but it is plainly impossible; and although it is of great importance to the honors which I am expecting\* that I should get to Rome as soon as possible, yet I feel I made a great mistake in leaving you behind. But as it seemed to be your wish not to make the voyage until your health was restored, I approved your decision. Nor do I think otherwise now, if you are still of the same opinion. But if hereafter, when you are able to eat as usual, you think you can follow me here, it is for you to decide. I sent Mario to you, telling him either to join me with you as soon as possible, or, if you are delayed, to come back here at once. But be assured of this, that if it can be so without risk to your health, there is nothing I wish so much as to have

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\* The triumph for the victory gained under his nominal command over the hill-tribes in Cilicia, during his governorship of that province (p. 61).

you with me. Only, if you feel it necessary for your recovery to stay a little longer at Patræ, there is nothing I wish so much as for you to get well. If you sail at once, you will catch us at Leucas. But if you want to get well first take care to secure pleasant companions, fine weather, and a good ship. Mind this, my good Tiro, if you love me—let neither Mario's visit nor this letter hurry you. By doing what is best for your own health, you will be best obeying my directions. Consider these points with your usual good sense. I miss you very much; but then I love you, and my affection makes me wish to see you well, just as my want of you makes me long to see you as soon as possible. But the first point is the most important. Above all, therefore, take care to get well: of all your innumerable services to me, this will be the most acceptable."

Cicero writes to him continually during his own journey homewards with the most thoughtful kindness, begs that he will be cautious as to what vessel he sails in, and recommends specially one very careful captain. He has left a horse and a mule ready for him when he lands at Brundisium. Then he hears that Tiro had been foolish enough to go to a concert, or something of the kind, before he was strong, for which he mildly reproves him. He has written to the physician to spare no care or pains, and to charge, apparently, what he pleases. Several of his letters to his friend Atticus, at this date, speak in the most anxious and affectionate terms of the serious illness of this faithful servant. Just as he and his party are starting from Leucas, they send a note "from Cicero and his son, and Quintus the elder and younger, to their best and kindest Tiro." Then from Rome comes a letter in the name of the whole family, wife and daughter included:—

“ Marcus Tullius Cicero, and Cicero the younger, and Terentia, and Tullia, and Brother Quintus, and Quintus's Son, to Tiro send greeting.

“ Although I miss your able and willing service every moment, still it is not on my own account so much as yours that I am sorry you are not well. But as your illness has now taken the form of a quartan fever (for so Curius writes), I hope, if you take care of yourself, you will soon be stronger. Only be sure, if you have any kindness for me, not to trouble yourself about anything else just now, except how to get well as soon as may be. I am quite aware how much you regret not being with me; but everything will go right if you get well. I would not have you hurry, or undergo the annoyance of sea-sickness while you are weak, or risk a sea voyage in winter.” Then he tells him all the news from Rome; how there had been quite an ovation on his arrival there; how Cæsar was (he thought) growing dangerous to the state; and how his own coveted “triumph” was still postponed. “All this,” he says, “I thought you would like to know.” Then he concludes: “Over and over again, I beg you to take care to get well, and to send me a letter whenever you have an opportunity. Farewell, again and again.”

Tiro got well, and outlived his kind master, who very soon after this, presented him with his freedom. It is to him that we are said to be indebted for the preservation and publication of Cicero's correspondence. He wrote, also, a biography of him, which Plutarch had seen, and of which he probably made use in his own “Life of Cicero,” but which has not come down to us.

There was another of his household for whom Cicero had the same affection. This was Sosithens, also a



slave, but a man, like Tiro, of some considerable education, whom he employed as his reader. His death affected Cicero quite as the loss of a friend. Indeed, his anxiety is such, that his Roman dignity is almost ashamed of it. "I grieve," he says, "more than I ought for a mere slave." Just as one might now apologize for making too much fuss about a favorite dog; for the slave was looked upon in scarcely a higher light in civilized Rome. They spoke of him in the neuter gender, as a chattel; and it was gravely discussed, in case of danger in a storm at sea, which it would be right first to cast overboard to lighten the ship, a valuable horse or an indifferent slave. Hortensius, the rival advocate who has been mentioned, a man of more luxurious habits and less kindly spirit than Cicero, who was said to feed the pet lampreys in his stews much better than he did his slaves, and to have shed tears at the death of one of these ugly favorites, would have probably laughed at Cicero's concern for Sositheus and Tiro.

But indeed every glimpse of this kind which Cicero's correspondence affords us gives token of a kindly heart, and makes us long to know something more. Some have suspected him of a want of filial affection, owing to a somewhat abrupt and curt announcement in a letter to Atticus of his father's death; and his stanch defenders propose to adopt, with Madvig, the reading *discessit*—"left us," instead of *decessit*—"died." There really seems no occasion. Unless Atticus knew the father intimately, there was no need to dilate upon the old man's death; and Cicero mentions subsequently, in terms quite as brief, the marriage of his daughter and the birth of his son—events in which we are assured he felt deeply interested. If any further ex-

planation of this seeming coldness be required, the following remarks of Mr. Forsyth are apposite and true:—

“The truth is, that what we call *sentiment* was almost unknown to the ancient Romans, in whose writings it would be as vain to look for it as to look for traces of Gothic architecture among classic ruins. And this is something more than a mere illustrations. It suggests a reason for the absence. Romance and sentiment came from the dark forests of the North, when Scandinavia and Germany poured forth their hordes to subdue and people the Roman Empire. The life of a citizen of the Republic of Rome was essentially a public life. The love of country was there carried to an extravagant length, and was paramount to, and almost swallowed up, the private and social affections. The state was everything, the individual comparatively nothing. In one of the letters of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius to Fronto, there is a passage in which he says that the Roman language had no word corresponding with the Greek *φιλοστοργία*,—the affectionate love for parents and children. Upon this Niebuhr remarks that the feeling was ‘not a Roman one; but Cicero possessed it in a degree which few Romans could comprehend, and hence he was laughed at for the grief which he felt at the death of his daughter Tullia.’ ”

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## CHAPTER X.

### ESSAYS ON “OLD AGE” AND “FRIENDSHIP.”

THE treatise on “Old Age,” which is thrown into the form of a dialogue, is said to have been suggested by the opening of Plato’s “Republic,” in which Cephalus touches so pleasantly on the enjoyments peculiar to that time of life. So far as light and graceful treatment of this subject goes, the Roman essayist at least does not fall short of his model. Montaigne said of

it, that "it made one long to grow old;" \* but Montaigne was a Frenchman, and such sentiment was quite in his way. The dialogue, whether it produce this effect on many readers or not, is very pleasant reading: and when we remember that the author wrote it when he was exactly in his grand climacteric, and addressed it to his friend Atticus, who was within a year of the same age, we get that element of personal interest which make all writings of the kind more attractive. The argument in defence of the paradox that it is a good thing to grow old, proceeds upon the only possible ground, the theory of compensations. It is put into the mouth of Cato the Censor, who had died about a century before, and who is introduced as giving a kind of lecture on the subject to his young friends Scipio and Lælius, in his eighty fourth year. He was certainly a remarkable example in his own case of its being possible to grow old gracefully and usefully, if, as he tells us, he was at that age still able to take part in the debates in the Senate, was busy collecting materials for the early history of Rome, had quite lately begun the study of Greek, could enjoy a country dinner-party, and had been thinking of taking lessons in playing on the lyre.

He states four reasons why old age is so commonly considered miserable. First, it unfits us for active employment; secondly, it weakens the bodily strength; thirdly, it deprives us of nearly all pleasures; fourthly and lastly, it is drawing near death. As to the first, the old senator argues very fairly that very much of the more important business of life is not only transacted by old men, but in point of fact, as is confessed by the

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\* "Il donne l'appetit de vieillir."

very name and composition of the Roman Senate, it is thought safest to intrust it to the elders in the state. The pilot at the helm may not be able to climb the mast and run up and down the deck like the younger sailor, but he steers none the worse for being old. He quotes some well-known examples of this from Roman annals; examples which might be matched by obvious instances in modern English history. The defense which he makes of old age against the second charge—loss of muscular vigor—is rather more of the nature of special pleading. He says little more than that mere muscular strength, after all, is not much wanted for our happiness: that there are always comparative degrees of strength; and that an old man need no more make himself unhappy because he has not the strength of a young man, than the latter does because he has not the strength of a bull or an elephant. It was very well for the great wrestler Milo to be able to carry an ox round the arena on his shoulders; but, on the whole, a man does not often want to walk about with a bullock on his back. The old are said, too, to lose their memory. Cato thinks they can remember pretty well all that they care to remember. They are not apt to forget who owes them money; and, “I never knew an old man forget,” he says, “where he had buried his gold.” Then as to the pleasures of the senses, which age undoubtedly diminishes our power of enjoying. “This,” says Cato, “is really a privilege, not a deprivation; to be delivered from the yoke of such tyrants as our passions—to feel that we have ‘got our discharge’ from such a warfare—is a blessing for which men ought rather to be grateful to their advancing years.” And the respect and authority which is by general consent

conceded to old age, is a pleasure more than equivalent to the vanished pleasures of youth.

There is one consideration which the author has not placed among his four chief disadvantages of growing old,—which, however, he did not forget, for he notices it incidentally in the dialogue,—the feeling that we are growing less agreeable to our friends, that our company is less sought after, and that we are, in short, becoming rather ciphers in society. This, in a condition of high civilization, is really perhaps felt by most of us as the hardest to bear of all the ills to which old age is liable. We should not care so much about the younger generation rising up and making us look old, if we did not feel that they are “pushing us from our stools.” Cato admits that he had heard some old men complain that “they were now neglected by those who had once courted their society,” and he quotes a passage from the comic poet Cæcilius:

“This is the bitterest pang in growing old,—  
To feel that we grow hateful to our fellows.”

But he dismisses the question briefly in his own case by observing with some complacency that he does not think his young friends find *his* company disagreeable—an assertion which Scipio and Lælius, who occasionally take part in the dialogue, are far too well bred to contradict. He remarks also, sensibly enough, that though some old persons are no doubt considered disagreeable company, this is in great measure their own fault: that testiness and ill-nature (qualities which, as he observes, do not usually improve with age) are always disagreeable, and that such persons attributed to their advancing years what was in truth the consequence of their unamiable tempers. It is not

all wine which turns sour with age, nor yet all tempers; much depends on the original quality. The old Censor lays down some maxims which, like the preceding, have served as texts for a good many modern writers, and may be found expanded, diluted, or strengthened, in the essays of Addison and Johnson, and in many of their followers of less repute. "I never could assent," says Cato, "to that ancient and much-bepraised proverb—that 'you must become an old man early, if you wish to be an old man long.'" Yet it was a maxim which was very much acted upon by modern Englishmen a generation or two back. It was then thought almost a moral duty to retire into old age, and to assume all its disabilities as well as its privileges, after sixty years or even earlier. At present the world sides with Cato, and rushes perhaps into the other extreme; for any line at which old age now begins would be hard to trace either in dress or deportment. "We must resist old age, and fight against it as a disease." Strong words from the old Roman; but, undoubtedly, so long as we stop short of the attempt to affect juvenility, Cato is right. We should keep ourselves as young as possible. He speaks shrewd sense, again, when he says—"As I like to see a young man who has something old about him, so I like to see an old man in whom there remains something of the youth: and he who follows this maxim may become an old man in body, but never in heart." "What a blessing it is," says Southey, "to have a boy's heart!" Do we not all know these charming old people, to whom the young take almost as heartily as to their own equals in age, who are the favorite consultees in all amusements, the confidants in all troubles?



Cato is made to place a great part of his own enjoyment, in these latter years of his, in the cultivation of his farm and garden (he had written, we must remember, a treatise "*De Re Rustica*,"—a kind of Roman "*Book of the Farm*," which we have still remaining). He is enthusiastic in his description of the pleasures of a country gentleman's life, and, like a good farmer, as no doubt he was, becomes eloquent upon the grand subject of manures. Gardening is a pursuit which he holds in equal honor—that "purest of human pleasures," as Bacon calls it. On the subject of the country life generally he confesses an inclination to become garrulous—the one failing which he admits may be fairly laid to the charge of old age. The picture of the way of living of a Roman gentleman-farmer, as he draws it, must have presented a strong contrast with the artificial city-life of Rome.

"Where the master of the house is a good and careful manager, his wine-cellar, his oil-stores, his larder, are always well stocked; there is a fullness throughout the whole establishment; pigs, kids, lambs, poultry, milk, cheese, honey,—all are in abundance. The produce of the garden is always equal, as our country-folk say, to a double course. And all these good things acquire a second relish from the voluntary labors of fowling and the chase. What need to dwell upon the charm of the green fields, the well-ordered plantations, the beauty of the vineyards and olive-groves? In short, nothing can be more luxuriant in produce, or more delightful to the eye, than a well-cultivated estate; and, to the enjoyment of this, old age is so far from being any hinderance, that it rather invites and allures us to such pursuits."

He has no patience with what has been called the

despondency of old age—the feeling, natural enough at that time of life, but not desirable to be encouraged, that there is no longer any room for hope or promise in the future which gives so much of its interest to the present. He will not listen to the poet when he says again—

“He plants the tree that shall not see the fruit.”

The answer which he would make has been often put into other and more elaborate language, but has a simple grandeur of its own. “If any should ask the aged cultivator for whom he plants, let him not hesitate to make this reply,—‘For the immortal gods, who, as they willed me to inherit these possessions from my forefathers, so would have me hand them on to those that shall come after.’”

The old Roman had not the horror of country society which so many civilized Englishmen either have or affect. “I like a talk,” he says, “over a cup of wine.” “Even when I am down at my Sabine estate, I daily make one at a party of my country neighbors, and we prolong our conversation very frequently far into the night.” The words are put into Cato’s mouth, but the voice is the well-known voice of Cicero. We find him here, as in his letters, persuading himself into the belief that the secret of happiness is to be found in the retirement of the country. And his genial and social nature beams through it all. We are reminded of his half-serious complaints to Atticus,\* of his importunate visitors at Formiæ, the dinner-parties which he was, as we say now, “obliged to go to,” and which he so evidently enjoyed.†

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\* See p. 39

† “A clergyman was complaining of the want of society in the

He is careful, however, to remind his reader that old age, to be really either happy or venerable, must not be the old age of the mere voluptuary or the debauchee; that the gray head, in order to be, even in his pagan sense, "a crown of glory," must have been "found in the way of righteousness." Shakespeare might have learned from Cicero in these points the moral which he puts into the mouth of his Adam—

"Therefore mine age is as a lusty winter,  
Frosty but kindly."

It is a miserable old age, says the Roman, which is obliged to appeal to its gray hairs as its only claim to the respect of its juniors. "Neither hoar hairs nor wrinkles can arrogate reverence as their right. It is the life whose opening years have been honorably spent which reaps the reward of reverence at its close."

In discussing the last of the evils which accompany old age, the near approach of death, Cicero rises to something higher than his usual level. His Cato will not have death to be an evil at all; it is to him the escaping from "the prison of the body,"—the "getting the sight of land at last after a long voyage, and coming into port." Nay, he does not admit that death is death. "I have never been able to persuade myself," he says, quoting the words of Cyrus in Xenophon, "that our spirits were alive while they were in these mortal bodies, and died only when they departed out of them; or that the spirit then only becomes void of sense when

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country where he lived, and said, 'They talk of *runts*' (*i.e.*, young cows). 'Sir,' said Mr. Salusbury, 'Mr. Johnson would learn to talk of runts;' meaning that I was a man who would make the most of my situation, whatever it was.'—Boswell's Life. Cicero was like Dr. Johnson.

it escapes from a senseless body; but that rather when freed from all admixture of corporality, it is pure and uncontaminated, then it most truly has sense." "I am fully persuaded," he says to his young listeners, "that your two fathers, my old and dearly-loved friends, are living now, and living that life which only is worthy to be so called." And he winds up the dialogue with the very beautiful apostrophe, one of the last utterances of the philosopher's heart, well known, yet not too well known to be here quoted—

"It likes me not to mourn over departing life, as many men, and men of learning, have done. Nor can I regret that I have lived, since I have so lived that I may trust I was not born in vain; and I depart out of life as out of a temporary lodging, not as out of my home. For nature has given it to us as an inn to tarry at by the way, not as a place to abide in. O glorious day! when I shall set out to join that blessed company and assembly of disembodied spirits and quit this crowd and rabble of life! For I shall go my way, not only to those great men of whom I spoke, but to my own son Cato, than whom was never better man born, nor more full of dutiful affection; whose body I laid on the funeral pile—an office he should rather have done for me.\* But his spirit has never left me; it still looks fondly back upon me, though it has gone assuredly into those abodes where he knew that I myself should follow. And this my great loss I seemed to bear with calmness; not that I bore it undisturbed, but that I still consoled myself with the thought that

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\* Burke touches the same key in speaking of his son: "I live in an inverted order. They who ought to have succeeded me have gone before me: they who should have been to me as posterity are in the place of ancestors."

the separation between us could not be for long. And if I err in this—in that I believe the spirits of men to be immortal—I err willingly; nor would I have this mistaken belief of mine uprooted so long as I shall live. But if after I am dead, I shall have no consciousness, as some curious philosophers assert, then I am not afraid of dead philosophers laughing at my mistake.”

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The essay on “Friendship” is dedicated by the author to Atticus—an appropriate recognition, as he says, of the long and intimate friendship which had existed between themselves. It is thrown, like the other, into the form of a dialogue. The principal speaker here is one of the listeners in the former one—Lælius, surnamed the Wise—who is introduced as receiving a visit from his two sons-in-law, Fannius and Scævola (the great lawyer before mentioned), soon after the sudden death of his great friend, the younger Scipio Africanus. Lælius takes the occasion, at the request of the young men, to give them his views and opinions on the subject of Friendship generally. This essay is perhaps more original than that upon “Old Age,” but certainly is not so attractive to a modern reader. Its great merit is the grace and polish of the language; but the arguments brought forward to prove what an excellent thing it is for a man to have good friends, and plenty of them, in this world, and the rules for his behavior towards them, seem to us somewhat trite and commonplace, whatever might have been their effect upon a Roman reader.

Cicero is indebted to the Greek philosophers for the main outlines of his theory of friendship, though his acquaintance with the works of Plato and Aristotle was

probably exceedingly superficial. He holds, with them, that man is a social animal; that "we are so constituted by nature that there must be some degree of association between us all, growing closer in proportion as we are brought into more intimate relations one with another." So that the social bond is a matter of instinct, not of calculation; not a cold commercial contract of profit and loss, of giving and receiving, but the fulfillment of one of the yearnings of our nature. Here he is in full accordance with the teaching of Aristotle, who, of all the various kinds of friendship to which he allows the common name, pronounces that which is founded merely upon interest—upon mutual interchange, by tacit agreement, of certain benefits—to be the least worthy of such a designation. Friendship is defined by Cicero to be "the perfect accord upon all questions, religious and social, together with mutual goodwill and affection." This "perfect accord," it must be confessed, is a very large requirement. He follows his Greek masters again in holding that true friendship can exist only among the good; that, in fact, all friendship must assume that there is something good and lovable in the person towards whom the feeling is entertained: it may occasionally be a mistaken assumption; the good quality we think we see in our friend may have no existence save in our own partial imagination; but the existence of the counterfeit is an incontestable evidence of the true original. And the greatest attraction, and therefore the truest friendships, will always be of the good towards the good.

He admits, however, the notorious fact, that good persons are sometimes disagreeable; and he confesses that we have a right to seek in our friends amiability as well as moral excellence. "Sweetness," he says—



anticipating, as all these ancients so provokingly do, some of our most modern popular philosophers—"sweetness, both in language and in manner, is a very powerful attraction in the formation of friendships." He is by no means of the same opinion as Sisyphus in Lord Lytton's "Tale of Miletus"—

"Now, then, I know thou really art my friend,—  
None but true friends choose such unpleasant words."

He admits that it is the office of a friend to tell unpleasant truths sometimes; but there should be a certain amount of this indispensable "sweetness" to temper the bitterness of the advice. There are some friends who are continually reminding you of what they have done for you—"a disgusting set of people verily they are," says our author. And there are others who are always thinking themselves slighted; "in which case there is generally something of which they are conscious in themselves, as laying them open to contemptuous treatment."

Cicero's own character displays itself in this short treatise. Here, as everywhere, he is the politician. He shows a true appreciation of the duties and the qualifications of a true friend; but his own thoughts are running upon political friendships. Just as when, in many of his letters, he talks about "all honest men," he means "our party;" so here, when he talks of friends, he cannot help showing that it was of the essence of friendship, in his view, to hold the same political opinions, and that one great use of friends was that a man should not be isolated, as he had sometimes feared he was, in his political course. When he puts forward the old instances of Coriolanus and Gracchus, and discusses the question whether their "friends" were

or were not bound to aid them in their treasonable designs against the state, he was surely thinking of the factions of his own times, and the troublesome brotherhoods which had gathered round Catiline and Clodius. Be this as it may, the advice which he makes Lælius give to his younger relatives is good for all ages, modern or ancient: "There is nothing in this world more valuable than friendship." "Next to the immediate blessing and providence of Almighty God," Lord Clarendon was often heard to say, "I owe all the little I know, and the little good that is in me, to the friendships and conversation I have still been used to, of the most excellent men in their several kinds that lived in that age."

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## CHAPTER XI.

### CICERO'S PHILOSOPHY.

#### "THE TRUE ENDS OF LIFE."\*

PHILOSOPHY was to the Roman what religion is to us. It professed to answer, so far as it might be answered, Pilate's question, "What is truth?" (or to teach men, as Cicero described it, "the knowledge of things human and divine." Hence the philosopher invests his subject with all attributes of dignity. To him Philosophy brings all blessings in her train. She is the guide of life, the medicine for his sorrows, "the fountain-head of all perfect eloquence—the mother of all good deeds and good words." He invokes with

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\* "De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum."

affectionate reverence the great name of Socrates—the sage who had “first drawn wisdom down from heaven.”

No man even approached his subject more richly laden with philosophic lore than Cicero. Snatching every leisure moment that he could from a busy life, he devotes it to the study of the great minds of former ages. Indeed, he held this study to be the duty of the perfect orator; a knowledge of the human mind was one of his essential qualifications. Nor could he conceive of real eloquence without it; for his definition of eloquence is, “wisdom speaking fluently.”\* But such studies were also suited to his own natural tastes. And as years passed on, and he grew weary of civil discords and was harassed by domestic troubles, the great orator turns his back upon the noisy city, and takes his parchments of Plato and Aristotle to be the friends of his councils and the companions of his solitude, seeking by their light to discover Truth, which Democritus had declared to be buried in the depths of the sea.

Yet, after all, he professes to do little more than translate. So conscious is he that it is to Greece that Rome is indebted for all her literature, and so conscious, also, on the part of his countrymen, of what he terms “an arrogant disdain for everything national,” that he apologizes to his readers for writing for the million in their mother-tongue. Yet he is not content, as he says, to be “a mere interpreter.” He thought that by an eclectic process—adopting and rearranging such of the doctrines of his Greek masters as approved themselves to his own judgment—he might make his own work a substitute for theirs. His ambition is to achieve what he might well regard as the hardest of

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\* “Copiose loquens sapientia.”

tasks—a popular treatise on philosophy; and he has certainly succeeded. He makes no pretense to originality; all he can do is, as he expresses it, “to array Plato in a Latin dress,” and “present this stranger from beyond the seas with the freedom of his native city.” And so this treatise on the Ends of Life—a grave question even to the most careless thinker—is, from the nature of the case, both dramatic and rhetorical. Representatives of the two great schools of philosophy—the Stoics and Epicureans—plead and counterplead in his pages, each in their turn; and their arguments are based on principles broad and universal enough to be valid even now. For now, as then, men are inevitably separated into two classes—amiable men of ease, who guide their conduct by the rudder-strings of pleasure—who for the most part “leave the world” (as has been finely said) “in the world’s debt, having consumed much and produced nothing;”\* or, on the other hand, zealous men of duty,—

“Who scorn delights and live laborious days,”

and act according to the dictates of their honor or their conscience. In practice, if not in theory, a man must be either Stoic or Epicurean.

Each school, in this dialogue, is allowed to plead its own cause. “Listen” (says the Epicurean) “to the voice of nature that bids you pursue pleasure, and do not be misled by that vulgar conception of pleasure as mere sensual enjoyment; our opponents misrepresent us when they say that we advocate this as the highest good; we hold, on the contrary, that men often obtain the greatest pleasure by neglecting this baser kind.

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\* Lord Derby.

Your highest instances of martyrdom—of Decii devoting themselves for their country, of consuls putting their sons to death to preserve discipline—are not disinterested acts of sacrifice, but the choice of a present pain in order to procure a future pleasure. Vice is but ignorance of real enjoyment. Temperance alone can bring peace of mind; and the wicked, even if they escape public censure, ‘are racked night and day by the anxieties sent upon them by the immortal gods.’ We do not, in this, contradict your Stoic; we, too, affirm that only the wise man is really happy. Happiness is as impossible for a mind distracted by passions, as for a city divided by contending factions. The terrors of death haunt the guilty wretch, ‘who finds out too late that he has devoted himself to money or power or glory to no purpose.’ But the wise man’s life is unalloyed happiness. Rejoicing in a clear conscience, ‘he remembers the past with gratitude, enjoys the blessings of the present, and disregards the future.’ Thus the moral to be drawn is that which Horace (himself, as he expresses it, ‘one of the litter of Epicurus’) impresses on his fair friend Leuconœ:

‘Strain your wine, and prove your wisdom; life is short; should hope be more?  
In the moment of our talking envious time has slipped away.  
Seize the present, trust to-morrow e’en as little as you may.’ ”

Passing on to the second book of the treatise, we hear the advocate of the counter-doctrine. Why, exclaims the Stoic, introduce Pleasure to the councils of Virtue? Why uphold a theory so dangerous in practice? Your Epicurean soon turns Epicure, and a class of men start up who have never seen the sun rise or set, who squander fortunes on cooks and perfumers, on costly plate and gorgeous rooms, and ransack sea and

land for delicacies to supply their feasts. Epicurus gives his disciples a dangerous discretion in their choice. There is no harm in luxury (he tells us) provided it be free from inordinate desires. But who is to fix the limit to such vague concessions?

Nay, more, he degrades men to the level of the brute creation. In his view, there is nothing admirable beyond this pleasure—no sensation or emotion of the mind, no soundness or health of body. And what is this pleasure which he makes of such high account? How short-lived while it lasts! how ignoble when we recall it afterwards! But even the common feeling and sentiments of men condemn so selfish a doctrine. We are naturally led to uphold truth and abhor deceit, to admire Regulus in his tortures, and to despise a lifetime of inglorious ease. And then follows a passage which echoes the stirring lines of Scott—

“Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife!  
To all the sensual world proclaim,  
One crowded hour of glorious life  
Is worth an age without a name.”

Do not then (concludes the Stoic) take good words in your mouth, and prate before applauding citizens of honor, duty, and so forth, while you make your private lives a mere selfish calculation of expediency. We were surely born for nobler ends than this, and none who is worthy the name of a man would subscribe to doctrines which destroy all honor and all chivalry. The heroes of old time won their immortality not by weighing pleasures and pains in the balance, but by being prodigal of their lives, doing and enduring all things for the sake of their fellow-men.

The opening scene in the third book is as lively and dramatic as (what was no doubt the writer's model) the



introduction of a Platonic dialogue. Cicero has walked across from his Tusculan villa to borrow some manuscripts from the well-stocked library of his young friend Lucullus \*—a youth whose high promise was sadly cut short, for he was killed at Philippi, when he was not more than twenty-three. There, “gorging himself with books,” Cicero finds Marcus Cato—a Stoic of the Stoics—who expounds in a high tone the principles of his sect.

Honor he declares to be the rule, and “life according to nature” the end of man’s existence. And wrong and injustice are more really contrary to this nature than either death, or poverty, or bodily suffering, or any other outward evil.”† Stoics and Peripatetics are agreed at least on one point—that bodily pleasures fade into nothing before the splendors of virtue, and that to compare the two is like holding a candle against the sunlight, or setting a drop of brine against the waves of the ocean. Your Epicurean would have each man live in selfish isolation, engrossed in his private pleasures and pursuits. We, on the other hand, maintain that “Divine Providence has appointed the world to be a common city for men and gods,” and each one of us to be a part of this vast social system. And thus every man has his lot and place in life, and should take for his guidance those golden rules of ancient times—“Obey God; know thyself; shun excess.” Then, rising to enthusiasm, the philosopher concludes: “Who cannot but admire the incredible beauty of such a system of moral-

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\* See p. 38.

† So Bishop Butler, in the preface to his *Sermons upon “Human Nature,”* says they were “intended to explain what is meant by the nature of man, when it is said that virtue consists in following, and vice in deviating from it.”

ity? What character in history or in fiction can be grander or more consistent than the 'wise man' of the Stoics? All the riches and glory of the world are his, for he alone can make a right use of all things. He is 'free,' though he be bound by chains; 'rich,' though in the midst of poverty; 'beautiful,' for the mind is fairer than the body; 'a king,' for, unlike the tyrants of the world, he is lord of himself; 'happy,' for he has no need of Solon's warning to 'wait till the end,' since a life virtuously spent is a perpetual happiness."

In the fourth book, Cicero himself proceeds to vindicate the wisdom of the ancients—the old Academic school of Socrates and his pupils—against what he considers the novelties of Stoicism. All that the Stoics have said has been said a hundred times before by Plato and Aristotle, but in nobler language. They merely "pick out the thorns" and "lay bare the bones" of previous systems, using newfangled terms and misty arguments with a "vainglorious parade." Their fine talk about citizens of the world and the ideal wise man is rather poetry than philosophy. They rightly connect happiness with virtue, and virtue with wisdom; but so did Aristotle some centuries before them.

But their great fault (says Cicero) is, that they ignore the practical side of life. So broad is the line which they draw between the "wise" and "foolish," that they would deny to Plato himself the possession of wisdom. They take no account of the thousand circumstances which go to form our happiness. To a spiritual being, virtue *might* be the chief good; but in actual life our physical is closely bound up with our mental enjoyment, and pain is one of those stern facts before which all theories are powerless. Again, by their fondness for paradox, they reduce all offenses to the same dead level.

It is, in their eyes, as impious to beat a slave as to beat a parent: because, as they say, "nothing can be *more* virtuous than virtue,—nothing *more* vicious than vice." And lastly, this stubbornness of opinion affects their personal character. They too often degenerate into austere critics and bitter partisans, and go far to banish from among us love, friendship, gratitude, and all the fair humanities of life.

The fifth book carries us back some twenty years, when we find Cicero once more at Athens, taking his afternoon walk among the deserted groves of the Academy. With him are his brother Quintus, his cousin Lucius, and his friends Piso and Atticus. The scene, with its historic associations, irresistibly carries their minds back to those illustrious spirits who had once made the place their own. Among these trees Plato himself had walked; under the shadow of that Porch Zeno had lectured to his disciples;\* yonder Quintus points out the "white peak of Colonus," described by Sophocles in "those sweetest lines;" while glistening on the horizon were the waves of the Phaleric harbor, which Demosthenes, Cicero's own great prototype, had outvoiced with the thunder of his declamation. So countless, indeed, are the memories of the past called up by the genius of the place, that (as one of the friends remarks) "wherever we plant our feet,

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\* The Stoics took their name from the "stoa," or portico in the Academy, where they *sat* at lecture, as the Peripatetics (the school of Aristotle) from the little knot of listeners who followed their master as he *walked*. Epicurus's school were known as the philosophers of "the Garden," from the place where he taught. The "Old Academy" were the disciples of Plato; the "New Academy" (to whose tenets Cicero inclined) revived the great principle of Socrates) of affirming nothing.

we tread upon some history." Then Piso, speaking at Cicero's request, begs his friends to turn from the degenerate thinkers of their own day to those giants of philosophy, from whose writings all liberal learning, all history, and all elegance of language may be derived. More than all, they should turn to the leader of the Peripatetics, Aristotle, who seemed (like Lord Bacon after him) to have taken all knowledge as his portion. From these, if from no other source, we may learn the secret of a happy life. But first we must settle what this "chief good" is—this end and object of our efforts—and not be carried to and fro, like ships without a steersman, by every blast of doctrine.

If Epicurus was wrong in placing Happiness

"In corporal pleasure and in careless ease,"

no less wrong are they who say that "honor" requires pleasure to be added to it, since they thus make honor itself dishonorable. And again, to say with others that happiness is tranquillity of mind, is simply to beg the question.

Putting, then, all such theories aside, we bring the argument to a practical issue. Self-preservation is the first great principle of nature; and so strong is this instinctive love of life, both among men and animals, that we see even the iron-hearted Stoic shrink from the actual pangs of a voluntary death. Then comes the question, What is this nature that is so precious to each of us? Clearly it is compounded of body and mind, each with many virtues of its own; but as the mind should rule the body, so reason, as the dominant faculty, should rule the mind. Virtue itself is only "the perfection of this reason," and, call it what you will, genius or intellect is something divine.

Furthermore, there is in man a gradual progress of reason, growing with his growth until it has reached perfection. Even in the infant there are "as it were sparks of virtue"—half-unconscious principles of love and gratitude; and these germs bear fruit, as the child develops into the man. We have also an instinct which attracts us towards the pursuit of wisdom; such is the true meaning of the Sirens' voices in the *Odyssey*, says the philosopher, quoting from the poet of all time:

"Turn thy swift keel and listen to our lay;  
Since never pilgrim to these regions came,  
But heard our sweet voice ere he sailed away,  
And in his joy passed on, with ampler mind." \*

It is wisdom, not pleasure, which they offer. Hence it is that men devote their days and nights to literature, without a thought of any gain that may accrue from it; and philosophers paint the serene delights of a life of contemplation in the islands of the blest.

Again, our minds can never rest. "Desire for action grows with us;" and in action of some sort, be it politics or science, life (if it is to be life at all) must be passed by each of us. Even the gambler must ply the dice-box, and the man of pleasure seek excitement in society. But in the true life of action, still the ruling principle should be honor.

Such, in brief, is Piso's (or rather Cicero's) vindication of the old masters of philosophy. Before they leave the place Cicero fires a parting shot at the Stoic paradox that the "wise man" is always happy. How, he pertinently asks, can one in sickness and poverty, blind, or childless, in exile or in torture, be possibly

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\* *Odyss.* xii. 185 (Worsley).

called happy, except by a monstrous perversion of language?\*

Here, somewhat abruptly, the dialogue closes; and Cicero pronounces no judgment of his own, but leaves the great question almost as perplexed as when he started the discussion. But, of the two antagonistic theories he leans rather to the Stoic than to the Epicurean. Self-sacrifice and honor seem, to his view, to present a higher ideal than pleasure or expediency.

## II. "ACADEMIC QUESTIONS."

Fragments of two editions of this work have come down to us; for almost before the first copy had reached the hands of his friend Atticus, to whom it was sent, Cicero had rewritten the whole on an enlarged scale. The first book (as we have it now) is dedicated to Varro, a noble patron of art and literature. In his villa at Cumæ were spacious porticoes and gardens, and a library with galleries and cabinets open to all comers. Here, on a terrace looking seawards, Cicero, Atticus, and Varro himself pass a long afternoon in discussing the relative merits of the old and new Academies; and hence we get the title of the work. Varro takes the lion's share of the first dialogue, and shows how from the "vast and varied genius of Plato" both Academies and Peripatetics drew all their philosophy, whether it related to morals, to nature, or to logic. Stoicism receives a passing notice, as also does what Varro considers the heresy of Theophrastus, who strips virtue of all its beauty, by denying that happiness depends upon it.

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\* In a little treatise called "Paradoxes," Cicero discusses six of these scholastic quibbles of the Stoics.



The second book is dedicated to another illustrious name, the elder Lucullus, not long deceased—half-statesman, half-dilettante, “with almost as divine a memory for facts,” says Cicero, with something of envy, “as Hortensius had for words.” This time it is at his villa, near Tusculum, amidst scenery, perhaps even now the loveliest of all Italian landscapes, that the philosophic dialogue takes place. Lucullus condemns the skepticism of the New Academy—those reactionists against the dogmatism of past times, who disbelieve their very eyesight. If (he says) we reject the testimony of the senses, there is neither body, nor truth, nor argument, nor anything certain left us. These perpetual doubters destroy every ground of our belief.

Cicero ingeniously defends this skepticism, which was, in fact, the bent of his own mind. After all, what is our eyesight worth? The ship sailing across the bay yonder seems to move, but to the sailors it is the shore that recedes from their view. Even the sun, “which mathematicians affirm to be eighteen times larger than the earth, looks but a foot in diameter.” And as it is with these things, so it is with all knowledge. Bold indeed must be the man who can define the point at which belief passes into certainty. Even the “fine frenzy” of the poet, his pictures of gods and heroes, are as lifelike to himself and to his hearers as though he actually saw them.

“See how Apollo, fair-haired god,  
Draws in and bends his golden bow,  
While on the left fair Dian waves her torch.”

No—we are sure of nothing; and we are happy if, like Socrates, we only know this—that we know nothing.

Then, as if in irony, or partly influenced perhaps by the advocate's love of arguing the case both ways, Cicero demolishes that grand argument of design which elsewhere he so carefully constructs,\* and reasons in the very language of materialism: "You assert that all the universe could not have been so ingeniously made without some godlike wisdom, the majesty of which you trace down even to the perfection of bees and ants. Why then did the Deity, when he made everything for the sake of man, make such a variety (for instance) of venomous reptiles? Your divine soul is a fiction; it is better to imagine that creation is the result of the laws of nature, and so release the Deity from a great deal of hard work, and me from fear; for which of us, when he thinks that he is an object of divine care, can help feeling an awe of the divine power day and night? But we do not understand even our own bodies; how, then, can we have an eyesight so piercing as to penetrate the mysteries of heaven and earth?"

The treatise, however, is but a disappointing fragment, and the argument is incomplete.

### III. THE "TUSCULAN DISPUTATIONS."

The scene of this dialogue is Cicero's villa at Tuscum. There, in his long gallery, he walks and discusses with his friends the vexed questions of mortality. Was death an evil? Was the soul immortal? How could a man best bear pain and the other miseries of life? Was virtue any guaranty for happiness?

Then, as now, death was the great problem of humanity—"to die and go we know not where." The

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\* See p. 148.

old belief in Elysium and Tartarus had died away; as Cicero himself boldly puts it in another place, such things were no longer even old wives' fables. Either death brought an absolute unconsciousness, or the soul soared into space. "*Lex non pœna mors*"—"Death is a law, not a penalty"—was the ancient saying. It was, as it were, the close of a banquet or the fall of the curtain. "While we are, death is not; when death has come, we are not."

Cicero brings forward the testimony of past ages to prove that death is not a mere annihilation. Man cannot perish utterly. Heroes are deified; and the spirits of the dead return to us in visions of the night. Somehow or other (he says) there clings to our minds a certain presage of future ages; and so we plant that our children may reap; we toil that others may enter into our labors; and it is this life after death, the desire to live in men's mouths forever, which inspires the patriot and the martyr. Fame to the Roman, even more than to us, was "the last infirmity of noble minds." It was so in a special degree to Cicero. The instinctive sense of immortality, he argues, is strong within us, and as, in the words of the English poet,

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting,"

so also in death, the Roman said, though in other words—

"Our souls have sight of that immortal sea  
Which brought us hither."

Believe not then, says Cicero, those old wives' tales, those poetic legends, the terrors of a material hell, or the joys of a sensual paradise. Rather hold with Plato that the soul is an eternal principle of life, which has

neither beginning nor end of existence; for if it were not so, heaven and earth would be upset, and all nature would stand at gaze. "Men say they cannot conceive or comprehend what the soul can be distinct from the body. As if, forsooth, they could comprehend what it is, when it is *in* the body,—its conformation, its magnitude, or its position there. . . . To me, when I consider the nature of the soul, there is far more difficulty and obscurity in forming a conception of what the soul is while in the body,—in a dwelling where it seems so little at home,—than of what it will be when it has escaped into the free atmosphere of heaven, which seems its natural abode." \* And as the poet seems to us inspired, as the gifts of memory and eloquence seem divine, so is the soul itself, in its simple essence, a god dwelling in the breast of each of us. What else can be this power which enables us to recollect the past, to foresee the future, to understand the present?

There follows a passage on the argument from design which anticipates that fine saying of Voltaire: "*Si Dieu n'existait pas, il faudrait l'inventer; mais toute la nature crie qu'il existe.*" "The heavens," says even the heathen philosopher, "declare the glory of God." Look on the sun and the stars; look on the alternation of the seasons and the changes of day and night; look again at the earth, bringing forth her fruits for the use of men; the multitude of cattle; and man himself, made as it were to contemplate and adore the heavens and the gods. Look on all these things, and doubt not that there is some Being, though you see him not, who has created and presides over the world.

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\*I. c. 22.

“Imitate, therefore, the end of Socrates; who, with the fatal cup in his hands, spoke with the serenity of one not forced to die, but, as it were, ascending into heaven; for he thought that the souls of men, when they left the body went by different roads; those polluted by vice and unclean living took a road wide of that which led to the assembly of the gods; while those who had kept themselves pure, and on earth had taken a divine life as their model, found it easy to return to those beings from whence they came.” Or learn a lesson from the swans, who, with a prophetic instinct, leave this world with joy and singing. Yet do not anticipate the time of death, “for the Deity forbids us to depart hence without his summons; but, on just cause given (as to Socrates and Cato), gladly should we exchange our darkness for that light, and, like men not breaking prison but released by the law, leave our chains with joy, as having been discharged by God.”

The feeling of these ancients with regard to suicide, we must here remember, was very different from our own. There was no distinct idea of the sanctity of life; no social stigma and consequent suffering were brought on the family of the suicide. Stoic and Epicurean philosophers alike upheld it as a lawful remedy against the pangs of disease, the dotage of old age, or the caprices of a tyrant. Every man might, they contended, choose his own route on the last great journey, and sleep well, when he grew wearied out with life's fitful fever. The door was always open (said Epictetus) when the play palled on the senses. You should quit the stage with dignity, nor drain the flask to the dregs. Some philosophers, it is true, protested against it as mere device of cowardice to avoid pain, and as a failure in our

duties as good citizens. Cicero, in one of his latest works, again quotes with approval the opinion of Pythagoras, that "no man should abandon his post in life without the orders of the Great Commander." But at Rome suicide had been glorified by a long roll of illustrious names, and the protest was made in vain.

But why, continues Cicero, why add to the miseries of life by brooding over death? Is life to any of us such unmixed pleasure even while it lasts? Which of us can tell whether he be taken away from good or from evil? As our birth is but "a sleep and a forgetting," so our death may be but a second sleep, as lasting as Endymion's. Why, then, call it wretched, even if we die before our natural time? Nature has lent us life, without fixing the day of payment; and uncertainty is one of the conditions of its tenure. Compare our longest life with eternity, and it is as short-lived as that of those ephemeral insects whose life is measured by a summer day; and "who, when the sun sets, have reached old age."

Let us, then, base our happiness on strength of mind, on a contempt of earthly pleasures, and on the strict observance of virtue. Let us recall the last noble words of Socrate to his judges. "The death," said he, "to which you condemn me, I count a gain rather than a loss. Either it is a dreamless sleep that knows no waking, or it carries me where I may converse with the spirits of the illustrious dead. *I go to death, you to life*; but which of us is going the better way, God only knows."

No man, then, dies too soon who has run a course of perfect virtue; for glory follows like a shadow in the wake of such a life. Welcome death, therefore, as a blessed deliverance from evil, sent by the special



favor of the gods, who thus bring us safely across a sea of troubles to an eternal haven.

The second topic which Cicero and his friends discuss is, the endurance of pain. Is it an unmixed evil? Can anything console the sufferer? Cicero at once condemns the sophistry of Epicurus. The wise man cannot pretend indifference to pain; it is enough that he endure it with courage, since, beyond all question, it is sharp, bitter, and hard to bear. And what is this courage? Partly excitement, partly the impulse of honor or of shame, partly the habituation which steels the endurance of the gladiator. Keep, therefore—this is the conclusion—stern restraint over the feminine elements of your soul, and learn not only to despise the attacks of pain, but also

“The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.”

From physical; the discussion naturally passes to mental, suffering. For grief, as well as for pain, he prescribes the remedy of the Stoics—*æquanimitas*—“a calm serenity of mind.” The wise man, ever serene and composed, is moved neither by pain or sorrow, by fear or desire. He is equally undisturbed by the malice of enemies or the inconstancy of fortune. But what consolation can we bring to ease the pain of the Epicurean? “Put a nosegay to his nostrils—burn perfumes before him—crown him with roses and woodbine!” But perfumes and garlands can do little in such case; pleasures may divert, but they can scarcely console.

Again, the Cyrenaics bring at the best but Job’s comfort. No man will bear his misfortunes the more lightly by bethinking himself that they are unavoidable—that others have suffered before him—that pain

is part and parcel of the ills which flesh is heir to. Why grieve at all? Why feed your misfortune by dwelling on it? Plunge rather into active life and forget it, remembering that excessive lamentation over the trivial accidents of humanity is alike unmanly and unnecessary. And as it is with grief, so it is with envy, lust, anger, and those other "perturbations of the mind" which the Stoic Zeno rightly declares to be "repugnant to reason and nature." From such disquietude it is the wise man who is free.

The fifth and last book discusses the great question, Is virtue of itself sufficient to make life happy? The bold conclusion is, that it is sufficient. Cicero is not content with the timid qualifications adopted by the school of the Peripatetics, who say one moment that external advantages and worldly prosperity are nothing, and then again admit that, though man may be happy without them, he is happier with them,—which is making the real happiness imperfect after all. Men differ in their views of life. As in the great Olympic games, the throng are attracted, some by desire of gain, some by the crown of wild olive, some merely by the spectacle; so, in the race of life, we are all slaves to some ruling idea, it may be glory, or money, or wisdom. But they alone can be pronounced happy whose minds are like some tranquil sea—"alarmed by no fears, wasted by no griefs, inflamed by no lusts, enervated by no relaxing pleasures,—and such serenity virtue alone can produce."

These "Disputations" have always been highly admired. But their popularity was greater in times when Cicero's Greek originals were less read or understood. Erasmus carried his admiration of this treatise to enthusiasm. "I cannot doubt," he says, "but that the

mind from which such teaching flowed was inspired in some sort by divinity."

#### IV. THE TREATISE "ON MORAL DUTIES."

The treatise "*De Officiis*," known as Cicero's "*Offices*," to which we pass next, is addressed by the author to his son, while studying at Athens under Cratippus; possibly in imitation of Aristotle, who inscribed his *Ethics* to his son Nicomachus. It is a treatise on the duties of a gentleman—"the noblest present," says a modern writer, "ever made by parent to a child."\* Written in a far higher tone than Lord Chesterfield's letters, though treating of the same subject, it proposes and answers multifarious questions which must occur continually to the modern Christian as well as to the ancient philosopher. "What makes an action right or wrong? What is a duty? What is expediency? How shall I learn to choose between my principles and my interests? And lastly (a point of casuistry which must sometimes perplex the strictest conscience), of two 'things honest,'† which is most so?"

The key-note of his discourse throughout is Honor; and the word seems to carry with it that magic force which Burke attributed to chivalry—"the unbought grace of life—the nurse of heroic sentiment and manly enterprise." *Noblesse oblige*,—and there is no state of life, says Cicero, without its obligations. In their due discharge consists all the nobility, and in their neglect

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\* Kelsall.

† The English "Honesty" and "Honor" alike fail to convey the full force of the Latin *honestus*. The word expresses a progress of thought from comeliness and grace of person to a noble and graceful character—all whose works are done in honesty and honor.

all the disgrace, of character. There should be no selfish devotion to private interests. We are born not for ourselves only, but for our kindred and fatherland. We owe duties not only to those who have benefited but to those who have wronged us. We should render to all their due; and justice is due even to the lowest of mankind: what, for instance (he says with a hardness which jars upon our better feelings), can be lower than a slave? Honor is that "unbought grace" which adds a lustre to every action. In society it produces courtesy of manners; in business, under the form of truth, it establishes public credit. Again, as equity, it smooths the harsh features of the law. In war it produces that moderation and good faith between contending armies which are the surest basis of a lasting peace. And so in honor are centred the elements of all the virtues—wisdom and justice, fortitude and temperance; and "if," he says, reproducing the noble words of Plato, as applied by him to Wisdom, "this 'Honor' could but be seen in her full beauty by mortal eyes, the whole world would fall in love with her."

Such is the general spirit of this treatise, of which only the briefest sketch can be given in these pages.

Cicero bases honor on our inherent excellence of nature, paying the same noble tribute to humanity as Kant some centuries after: "On earth there is nothing great but man; in man there is nothing great but mind." Truth is a law of our nature. Man is only "lower than the angels;" and to him belong prerogatives which mark him off from the brute creation—the faculties of reason and discernment, the sense of beauty, and the love of law and order. And from this arises that fellow-feeling which, in one sense, "makes the whole world kin"—the spirit of Terence's famous

line, which Cicero notices (applauded on its recitation, as Augustin tells us, by the cheers of the entire audience in the theatre)—

“Homo sum—humani nihil a me alienum puto;” \*

for (he continues) “all men by nature love one another, and desire an intercourse of words and action.” Hence spring the family affections, friendship, and social ties; hence also that general love of combination, which forms a striking feature of the present age, resulting in clubs, trades-unions, companies, and generally in what Mr. Carlyle terms “swarmery.”

Next to truth, justice is the great duty of mankind. Cicero at once condemns “communism” in matters of property. Ancient immemorial seizure, conquest, or compact, may give a title; but “no man can say that he has anything his own by a right of nature.” Injustice springs from avarice or ambition, the thirst of riches or of empire, and is the more dangerous as it appears in the more exalted spirits, causing a dissolution of all ties and obligations. And here he takes occasion to instance “that late most shameless attempt of Cæsar’s to make himself master of Rome.”

There is, besides, an injustice of omission. You may wrong your neighbor by seeing him wronged without interfering. Cicero takes the opportunity of protesting strongly against the selfish policy of those lovers of ease and peace, who, “from a desire of furthering their own interests, or else from a churlish temper, profess that they mind nobody’s business but their own, in order that they may seem to be men of strict integrity and to injure none,” and thus shrink

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\* “I am a man—I hold that nothing which concerns mankind can be matter of unconcern to me.”

from taking their part in "the fellowship of life." He would have had small patience with our modern doctrine of non-intervention and neutrality in nations any more than in men. Such conduct arises (he says) from the false logic with which men cheat their conscience; arguing reversely, that whatever is the best policy is—honesty.

There are two ways, it must be remembered, in which one man may injure another—force and fraud; but as the lion is a nobler creature than the fox, so open violence seems less odious than secret villany. No character is so justly hateful as

"A rogue in grain,  
Veneered with sanctimonious theory."

Nations have their obligations as well as individuals, and war has its laws as well as peace. The struggle should be carried on in a generous temper, and not in the spirit of extermination, when "it has sometimes seemed a question between two hostile nations, not which should remain a conqueror, but which should remain a nation at all."

No mean part of justice consists in liberality, and this, too, has its duties. It is an important question, how, and when, and to whom, we should give? It is possible to be generous at another person's expense; it is possible to injure the recipient by mistimed liberality; or to ruin one's fortune by open house and prodigal hospitality. A great man's bounty (as he says in another place) should be a common sanctuary for the needy. "To ransom captives and enrich the meaner folk is a nobler form of generosity than providing wild beasts or shows of gladiators to amuse the mob." Charity should begin at home; for relations



and friends hold the first place in our affections; but the circle of our good deeds is not to be narrowed by the ties of blood, or sect, or party, and "our country comprehends the endearments of all." We should act in the spirit of the ancient law—"Thou shalt keep no man from the running stream, or from lighting his torch at thy hearth," Our liberality should be really liberal,—like that charity which Jeremy Taylor describes as "friendship to all the world."

Another component principle of this honor is courage, or "greatness of soul," which (continues Cicero) has been well defined by the Stoics as "a virtue contending for justice and honesty;" and its noblest form is a generous contempt for ordinary objects of ambition, not "from a vain or fantastic humor, but from solid principles of reason." The lowest and commoner form of courage is the mere animal virtue of the fighting-cock.

But a character should not only be excellent,—it should be graceful. In gesture and deportment men should strive to acquire that dignified grace of manners "which adds as it were a lustre to our lives." They should avoid affectation and eccentricity; "not to care a farthing what people think of us is a sign not so much of pride as of immodesty." The want of tact—the saying and doing things at the wrong time and place—produces the same discord in society as a false note in music; and harmony of character is of more consequence than harmony of sounds. There is a grace in words as well as in conduct; we should avoid unseasonable jests, "and not lard our talk with Greek quotations."\*

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\* This last precept Cicero must have considered did not apply

In the path of life, each should follow the bent of his own genius, so far as it is innocent—

“Honor and shame from no condition rise;  
Act well your part—there all the honor lies.”

Nothing is so difficult (says Cicero) as the choice of a profession, inasmuch as “the choice has commonly to be made when the judgment is weakest.” Some tread in their father’s steps, others beat out a fresh line of their own; and (he adds, perhaps not without a personal reference) this is generally the case with those born of mean parents, who propose to carve their own way in the world. But the *parvenu* of Arpinum—the “new man,” as aristocratic jealousy always loved to call him—is by no means insensible to the true honors of ancestry. “The noblest inheritance,” he says, “that can ever be left by a father to his son, far excelling that of lands and houses, is the fame of his virtues and glorious actions;” and saddest of all sights is that of a noble house dragged through the mire by some degenerate descendant, so as to be a by-word among the populace,—“which may” (he concludes) “be justly said of but too many in out times.”

The Roman’s view of the comparative dignity of professions and occupations is interesting, because his prejudices (if they be prejudices) have so long maintained their ground amongst us moderns. Tax-gatherers and usurers are as unpopular now as ever—the latter very deservedly so. “Retail trade is despicable, we are told, and “all mechanics are by their profession mean.” Especially such trades as minister to mere appetite or luxury—butchers, fishmongers, and

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to letter-writing, otherwise he was a notorious offender against his own rule.

cooks; perfumers, dancers, and suchlike. But medicine, architecture, education, farming, and even wholesale business, especially importation and exportation, are the professions of a gentleman. "But if the merchant, satisfied with his profits, shall leave the seas and from the harbor step into a landed estate, such a man seems justly deserving of praise." We seem to be reading the verdict of modern English society delivered by anticipation two thousand years ago.

The section ends with earnest advice to all, that they should put their principles into practice. "The deepest knowledge of nature is but a poor and imperfect business, unless it proceeds into action. As justice consists in no abstract theory, but in upholding society among men,—as "greatness of soul itself, if it be isolated from the duties of social life, is but a kind of uncouth churlishness,"—so it is each citizen's duty to leave his philosophic seclusion of a cloister, and take his place in public life, if the times demand it, "though he be able to number the stars and measure out the world."

The same practical vein is continued in the next book. What, after all, are a man's real interests? what line of conduct will best advance the main end of his life? Generally, men make the fatal mistake of assuming that honor must always clash with their interests; while in reality, says Cicero, "they would obtain their ends best, not by knavery and underhand dealing, but by justice and integrity." The right is identical with the expedient. "The way to secure the favor of the gods is by upright dealing; and next to the gods, nothing contributes so much to men's happiness as men themselves." It is labor and co-operation which have given us all the goods which we possess.

Since, then, man is the best friend to man, and also

his most formidable enemy, an important question to be discussed is the secret of influence and popularity—"the art of winning men's affections." For to govern by bribes or by force is not really to govern at all; and no obedience based on fear can be lasting—"no force of power can bear up long against a current of public hate." Adventurers who ride rough-shod over law (he is thinking again of Cæsar) have but a short-lived reign; and "liberty, when she has been chained up a while, bites harder when let loose than if she had never been chained at all."\* Most happy was that just and moderate government of Rome in earlier times, when she was "the port and refuge for princes and nations in their hour of need." Three requisites go to form that popular character which has a just influence over others: we must win men's love, we must deserve their confidence, and we must inspire them with an admiration for our abilities. The shortest and most direct road to real influence is that which Socrates recommends—"for a man to be that which he wishes men to take him for."†

Then follow some maxims which show how thoroughly conservative was the policy of our philosopher. The security of property he holds to be the security of the state. There must be no playing with vested

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\* It is curious to note how, throughout the whole of this argument, Cicero, whether consciously or unconsciously, works upon the principle that the highest life is the political life, and that the highest object a man can set before him is the obtaining, by legitimate means, influence and authority among his fellow-citizens.

† "Not being less but more than all  
The gentleness he seemed to be."

—Tennyson: "In Memoriam."

rights, no unequal taxation, no attempt to bring all things to a level, no canceling of debts and redistribution of land (he is thinking of the baits held out by Catiline), none of those traditional devices for winning favor with the people which tend to destroy that social concord and unity which make a commonwealth. "What reason is there," he asks, "why, when I have bought, built, repaired, and laid out much money, another shall come and enjoy the fruits of it?"

And as a man should be careful of the interests of the social body, so he should be of his own. But Cicero feels that in descending to such questions he is somewhat losing sight of his dignity as a moralist. "You will find all this thoroughly discussed," he says to his son, "in Xenophon's *Œconomics*—a book which, when I was just your age, I translated from the Greek into Latin." [One wonders whether young Marcus took the hint.] "And if you want instruction in money matters there are gentlemen sitting on the Exchange who will teach you much better than the philosophers."

The last book opens with a saying of the elder Cato's, which Cicero much admires, though he says modestly that he was never able in his own case quite to realize it—"I am never less idle than when I am idle, and never less alone than when alone." Retirement and solitude are excellent things, Cicero always declares; generally contriving at the same time to make it plain, as he does here, that his own heart is in the world of public life. But at least it gives him time for writing. He "has written more in this short time, since the fall of the Commonwealth, than in all the years during which it stood."

He here resolves the question, If honor and interest

seem to clash, which is to give way? Or rather, it has been resolved already; if the right be always the expedient, the opposition is seeming, not real. He puts a great many questions of casuistry, but it all amounts to this: the good man keeps his oath, "though it were to his own hinderance." But it is never to his hinderance; for a violation of his conscience would be the greatest hinderance of all.

In this treatise, more than in any of his other philosophical works, Cicero inclines to the teaching of the Stoics. In the others, he is rather the seeker after truth than the maintainer of a system. His is the critical eclecticism of the "New Academy"—the spirit so prevalent in our own day, which fights against the shackles of dogmatism. And with all his respect for the nobler side of Stoicism, he is fully alive to its defects; though it was not given to him to see, as Milton saw after him, the point wherein that great system really failed—the "philosophic pride" which was the besetting sin of all disciples in the school, from Cato to Seneca:

"Ignorant of themselves, of God much more,

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Much of the soul they talk, but all awry;  
And in themselves seek virtue, and to themselves  
All glory arrogate,—to God give none;  
Rather accuse Him under usual names,  
Fortune, or Fate, as one regardless quite  
Of mortal things."\*

Yet, in spite of this, such men were as the salt of the earth in a corrupt age; and as we find, throughout the more modern pages of history, great preachers denouncing wickedness in high places,—Bourdaloue and

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\* *Paradise Regained.*



Massillon pouring their eloquence into the heedless ears of Louis XIV. and his courtiers—Sherlock and Tillotson declaiming from the pulpit in such stirring accents that “even the indolent Charles roused himself to listen, and the fastidious Buckingham forgot to sneer” \*—so too, do we find these “monks of heathendom,” as the Stoics have been not unfairly called, protesting in their day against that selfish profligacy which was fast sapping all morality in the Roman empire. No doubt (as Mr. Lecky takes care to tell us), their high principles were not always consistent with their practice (alas! whose are?); Cato may have ill-used his slaves, Sallust may have been rapacious, and Seneca wanting in personal courage. Yet it was surely something to have set up a noble ideal, though they might not attain to it themselves, and in “that hideous carnival of vice” to have kept themselves, so far as they might, unspotted from the world. Certain it is that no other ancient sect ever came so near the light of revelation. Passages from Seneca, from Epictetus, from Marcus Aurelius, sound even now like fragments of the inspired writings. The Unknown God, whom they ignorantly worshiped as the Soul or Reason of the World, is—in spite of Milton’s strictures the beginning and the end of their philosophy. Let us listen for a moment to their language. “Prayer should be only for the good.” “Men should act according to the spirit, and not according to the letter of their faith.” “Wouldst thou propitiate the gods? Be good: he has worshiped them sufficiently who has imitated them.” It was from a Stoic poet, Aratus, that St. Paul quoted the great truth which was the rational argument against idolatry—“For we are also His offspring, and” (so the

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\* Macaulay.

original passage concludes) "we alone possess a voice, which is the image of reason." It is in another poet of the same school that we find what are perhaps the noblest lines in all Latin poetry. Persius concludes his Satire on the common hypocrisy of those prayers and offerings to the gods which were but a service of the lips and hands, in words of which an English rendering may give the sense but not the beauty:—"Nay, then, let us offer to the gods that which the debauched sons of great Messala can never bring on their broad chargers,—a soul wherein the laws of God and man are blended,—a heart pure to its inmost depths,—a breast ingrained with a noble sense of honor. Let me but bring these with me to the altar, and I care not though my offering be a handful of corn." With these grand words, fit precursors of a purer creed to come, we may take our leave of the Stoics, remarking how thoroughly, even in their majestic egotism, they represented the moral force of the nation among whom they flourished; a nation, says a modern preacher, "whose legendary and historic heroes could thrust their hand into the flame, and see it consumed without a nerve shrinking; or come from captivity on parole, advise their countrymen against a peace, and then go back to torture and certain death; or devote themselves by solemn self-sacrifice like the Decii. The world must bow before such men; for, unconsciously, here was a form of the spirit of the Cross—self-surrender, unconquerable fidelity to duty, sacrifice for others." \*

Portions of three treatises by Cicero upon Political Philosophy have come down to us: 1. "*De Republica*"; a dialogue on Government, founded chiefly on the "*Republic*" of Plato;

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\* F. W. Robertson, *Sermons*, i. 218.

2. "De Legibus"; a discussion on Law in the abstract, and on national systems of legislation; 3. "De Jure Civili"; of which last only a few fragments exist. His historical works have all perished.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### CICERO'S RELIGION.

It is difficult to separate Cicero's religion from his philosophy. In both he was a skeptic, but in the better sense of the word. His search after truth was in no sneering or incredulous spirit, but in that of a reverent inquirer. We must remember, in justice to him, that an earnest-minded man in his day could hardly take higher ground than that of the sceptic. The old polytheism was dying out in everything but in name, and there was nothing to take its place.

His religious belief, so far as we can gather it, was rather negative than positive. In the speculative treatise which he has left us, "On the Nature of the Gods," he examines all the current creeds of the day, but leaves his own quite undefined.

The treatise takes the form, like the rest, of an imaginary conversation. This is supposed to have taken place at the house of Aurelius Cotta, then Pontifex Maximus—an office which answered nearly to that of Minister of religion. The other speakers are Balbus, Velleius, and Cicero himself,—who acts, however, rather in the character of moderator than of disputant. The debate is still, as in the more strictly philosophical dialogues, between the different schools. Velleius first sets forth the doctrine of his master Epicurus; speaking

about the gods, says one of his opponents, with as much apparent intimate knowledge "as if he had just come straight down from heaven." All the speculations of previous philosophers—which he reviews one after the other—are, he assures the company, palpable errors. The popular mythology is a mere collection of fables. Plato and the Stoics, with their Soul of the world and their pervading Providence, are entirely wrong; the disciples of Epicurus alone are right. There are gods; that much, the universal belief of mankind in all ages sufficiently establishes. But that they should be the laborious beings which the common systems of theology would make them,—that they should employ themselves in the manufacture of worlds,—is manifestly absurd. Some of this argument is ingenious. "What should induce the Deity to perform the functions of an *Ædile*, to light up and decorate the world? If it was to supply better accommodation for himself, then he must have dwelt of choice, up to that time, in the darkness of a dungeon. If such improvements gave him pleasure, why should he have chosen to be without them so long?"

No—the gods are immortal and happy beings; and these very attributes imply that they should be wholly free from the cares of business—exempt from labor, as from pain and death. They are in human form, but of an ethereal and subtile essence, incapable of our passions or desires. Happy in their own perfect wisdom and virtue, they

"Sit beside their nectar, careless of mankind."

Cotta—speaking in behalf of the New Academy—controverts these views. Be these your gods, Epicurus? as well say there are no gods at all. What reverence, what love, or what fear can men have of beings who

neither wish them, nor can work them, good or ill? Is idleness the divinest life? "Why, 'tis the very heaven of schoolboys; yet the schoolboys, on their holiday, employ themselves in games." Nay, he concludes, what the Stoic Posidonius said of your master Epicurus is true—"He believed there were no gods, and what he said about their nature he said only to avoid popular odium." He could not believe that the Deity has the outward shape of a man, without any solid essence; that he has all the members of a man, without the power to use them; that he is a shadowy transparent being, who shows no favor and confers no benefits on any, cares for nothing and does nothing; this is to allow his existence of the gods in word, but to deny it in fact.

Velleius compliments his opponent on his clever argument, but desires that Balbus would state his views upon the question. The Stoic consents; and, at some length, proceeds to prove (what neither disputant has at all denied) the existence of Divine beings of some kind. Universal belief, well-authenticated instances of their appearance to men, and of the fulfillment of prophecies and omens, are all evidences of their existence. He dwells much, too, on the argument from design, of which so much use has been made by modern theologians. He furnishes Paley with the idea for his well-known illustration of the man who finds a watch; "when we see a dial or a water-clock, we believe that the hour is shown thereon by art, and not by chance."\* He gives also an illustration from the poet Attius, which from a poetical imagination has since become an historical incident; the shepherds who see the ship *Argo* approaching take the new monster for a thing of life, as

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\* De Nat. Deor. ii. 34. Paley's Nat. Theol. ch. i.

the Mexicans regarded the ships of Cortes. Much more, he argues, does the harmonious order of the world bespeak an intelligence within. But his conclusion is that the Universe itself is the Deity; or that the Deity is the animating Spirit of the Universe; and that the popular mythology, which gives one god to the Earth, one to the Sea, one to Fire, and so on, is in fact a distorted version of this truth. The very form of the universe—the sphere—is the most perfect of all forms, and therefore suited to embody the Divine.

Then Cotta—who though, as Pontifex, he is a national priest by vocation, is of that sect in philosophy which makes doubt its creed—resumes his objections. He is no better satisfied with the tenets of the Stoics than with those of the Epicureans. He believes that there are gods; but, coming to the discussion as a dispassionate and philosophical observer, he finds such proofs as are offered of their existence insufficient. But this third book is fragmentary, and the continuity of Cotta's argument is broken by considerable gaps in all the manuscripts. There is a curious tradition, that these portions were carefully torn out by the early Christians, because they might prove too formidable weapons in the hands of unbelievers. Cotta professes throughout only to raise his objections in the hope that they may be refuted; but his whole reasoning is destructive of any belief in an overruling Providence. He confesses himself puzzled by that insoluble mystery—the existence of Evil in a world created and ruled by a beneficent Power. The gods have given man reason, it is said; but man abuses the gift to evil ends. "This is the fault," you say, "of men, not of the gods. As though the physician should complain of the virulence of the disease, or the pilot of the fury of the tempest! Though these are but mortal



men, even in them it would seem ridiculous. Who would have asked your help, we should answer, if these difficulties had not arisen? May we not argue still more strongly in the case of the gods? The fault, you say, lies in the vices of men. But you should have given men such a rational faculty as would exclude the possibility of such crimes." He sees, as David did, "the ungodly in prosperity." The laws of Heaven are mocked, crimes are committed, and "the thunders of Olympian Jove are silent." He quotes, as it would always be easy to quote, examples of this from all history: the most telling and original, perhaps, is the retort of Diagoras; who was called the Atheist, when they showed him in the temple at Samothrace the votive tablets (as they may be seen in some foreign churches now) offered by those shipwrecked seamen who had been saved from drowning. "Lo, thou that deniest a Providence, behold here how many have been saved by prayer to the gods!" "Yea," was his reply; "but where are those commemorated who were drowned?"

The Dialogue ends with no resolution of the difficulties, and no conclusion as to the points in question. Cicero, who is the narrator of the imaginary conference, gives it as his opinion that the arguments of the Stoic seemed to him to have "the greater probability." It was the great tenet of the school which he most affected, that probability was the nearest approach that man could make to speculative truth. "We are not among those," he says, "to whom there seems to be no such thing as truth; but we say that all truths have some falsehoods attached to them which have so strong a resemblance to truth, that in such cases there is no certain note of distinction which can determine our judgment and assent. The consequence of which is

that there are many things probable ; and although they are not subjects of actual perception to our senses, yet they have so grand and glorious an aspect that a wise man governs his life thereby." \* It remained for one of our ablest and most philosophical Christian writers to prove that in such matters probability was practically equivalent to demonstration. † Cicero's own form of skepticism in religious matters is perhaps very nearly expressed in the striking anecdote which he puts, in this dialogue, into the mouth of the Epicurean.

"If you ask me what the Deity is, or what his nature and attributes are, I should follow the example of Simonides, who, when the tyrant Hiero proposed to him the same question, asked a day to consider of it. When the king, on the next day, required from him the answer, Simonides requested two days more; and when he went on continually asking double the time, instead of giving any answer, Hiero in amazement demanded of him the reason. 'Because,' replied he, 'the longer I meditate on the question, the more obscure does it appear.'" ‡

The position of Cicero as a statesman, and also as a member of the College of Augurs, no doubt checked any strong expression of opinion on his part as to the forms of popular worship and many particulars of popular belief. In the treatise which he intended as in some sort a sequel to this Dialogue on the "Nature of the Gods"—that upon "Divination"—he states the arguments for and against the national belief in omens, auguries, dreams, and such intimations of the Divine

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\* De Nat. Deor. i. 5.

† "To us, probability is the very guide of life."—Introduct. to Butler's Analogy.

‡ De Nat. Deor. i., 22.

will.\* He puts the defence of the system in the mouth of his brother Quintus, and takes himself the destructive side of the argument: but whether this was meant to give his own real views on the subject, we cannot be so certain. The course of argument employed on both sides would rather lead to the conclusion that the writer's opinion was very much that which Johnson delivered as to the reality of ghosts—"All argument is against it, but all belief is for it."

With regard to the great questions of the soul's immortality, and a state of future rewards and punishments, it would be quite possible to gather from Cicero's writings passages expressive of entirely contradictory views. The bent of his mind, as has been sufficiently shown, was towards doubt, and still more towards discussion; and possibly his opinions were not so entirely in a state of flux as the remains of his writings seem to show. In a future state of some kind he must certainly have believed—that is, with such belief as he would have considered the subject-matter to admit of—as a strong probability. In a speculative fragment which has come down to us, known as "Scipio's Dream," we seem to have the creed of the man rather than the speculations of the philosopher. Scipio Africanus the elder appears in a dream to the younger who bore his name (his grandson by adoption). He shows him a vision of heaven; bids him listen to the music of the spheres, which, as they move in their order, "by a modulation of high and low sounds," give forth that harmony which men have in some poor sort reduced to notation. He bids him look down upon the earth,

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\* There is a third treatise, "*De Fato*," apparently a continuation of the series, of which only a portion has reached us. It is a discussion of the difficult questions of Fate and Free-will.

contracted to a mere speck in the distance, and draws a lesson of the poverty of all mere earthly fame and glory.

“For all those who have preserved, or aided, or benefited their country, there is a fixed and definite place in heaven, where they shall be happy in the enjoyment of everlasting life.” But “the souls of those who have given themselves up to the pleasures of sense, and made themselves, as it were, the servants of these,—who at the bidding of the lust which wait upon pleasure have violated the laws of gods and men,—they, when they escape from the body, flit still around the earth, and never attain to these abodes but after many ages of wandering.” We may gather that his creed admitted a Valhalla for the hero and the patriot, and a long process of expiation for the wicked.

There is a curious passage preserved by St. Augustin from that one of Cicero’s works which he most admired—the lost treatise on “Glory” \*—which seems to show that so far from being a materialist, he held the body to be a sort of purgatory for the soul.

“The mistakes and the sufferings of human life make me think sometimes that those ancient seers, or interpreters of the secrets of heaven and the counsels of the Divine mind, had some glimpse of the truth, when they said that men are born in order to suffer the penalty for some sins committed in a former life; and that the idea is true which we find in Aristotle, that we are suffering some such punishment as theirs of old, who fell into the hands of those Etruscan bandits, and were put to death with a studied cruelty; their living bodies being tied to dead bodies, face to face, in closest possible conjunction; that so our souls are coupled to our bodies, united like the living with the dead.”

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\* See p. 26.

But whatever might have been the theological side, if one may so express it, of Cicero's religion, the moral aphorisms which meet us here and there in his works have often in them a teaching which comes near the tone of Christian ethics. The words of Petrarch are hardly too strong—"You would fancy sometimes it was not a Pagan philosopher but a Christian apostle who was speaking."\* These are but a few out of many which might be quoted: "Strive ever for the truth, and so reckon as that not thou art mortal, but only this thy body, for thou art not that which this outward form of thine shows forth, but each man's mind, that is the real man—not the shape which can be traced with the finger."† "Yea, rather, they live who have escaped from the bonds of their flesh as from a prison-house."

"Follow after justice and duty; such a life is the path to heaven, and into yon assembly of those who have once lived, and now, released from the body, dwell in that place." Where, in any other heathen writer, shall we find such noble words as those which close the apostrophe in the *Tusculans*?—"One single day well spent, and in accordance with thy precepts, were better to be chosen than an immortality of sin!"‡ He is addressing himself, it is true, to Philosophy; but his Philosophy is here little less than the Wisdom of Scripture: and the spiritual aspiration is the same—only uttered under greater difficulties—as that of the Psalmist when he exclaims, "One day in thy courts is better than a thousand!" We may or may adopt Erasmus's view of his inspiration—or rather, inspiration

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\* "Interdum non Paganum philosophum, sed apostolum loquipes."

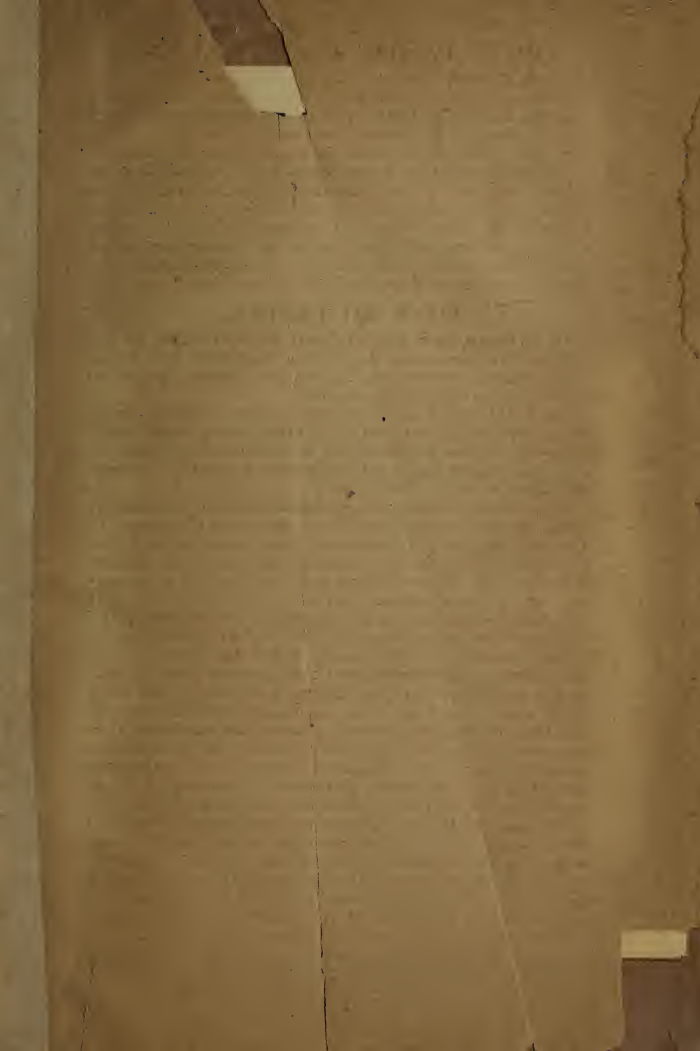
† "The Dream of Scipio."

‡ *Tusc.*, v. 2.

is a word which has more than one definition, and this would depend upon which definition we take; but we may well sympathize with the old scholar when he says —“I feel a better man for reading Cicero.”

THE END.





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